

MAPPER MUNDY'S TREASURE HUNT

By the same author:

Jim Starling

Jim Starling and the Agency

Jim Starling's Holiday

Jim Starling and the Colonel

The Boy at the Window

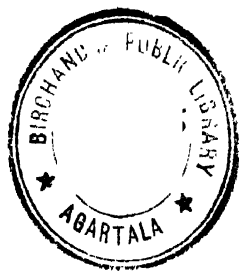
Jim Starling and the Spotted Dog

Jim Starling Takes Over

MAPPER
MUNDY'S
TREASURE
HUNT

E. W. Hildick

*Illustrated by
John Cooper*



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BLOND EDUCATIONAL LTD

1923

The author and publishers wish to thank the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office for permission to reproduce the map sections in colour from O.S. Sheet 122.

*Printed in Great Britain by Charles
Birchall & Sons Ltd., London and Liverpool. O.S. maps
printed by Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd.*

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	One	The Scrap of Paper	<i>Page</i>	7
	Two	The Scribbled Figures		24
	Three	The Angry Stranger		45
	Four	“This is it!”		63
	Five	A Doubtful Start	• •	79
	Six	“That’s Smarty Pants!”	•	95
	Seven	The Path Across the Fields		100
	Eight	“They’re digging at the bottom of that tree!”		108
	Nine	The Loot		120
		Signs and Maps (i)-(iv) appear between		72 and 73

1 *The Scrap of Paper*

“Hey! Look where you’re going!”

The newspaper seller clutched at the pile of papers that had nearly gone slithering from his stand.

The boy who had bumped into them paused. He didn’t stop running altogether—he was too excited for that—but, turning round, he did a kind of jog-trot on the spot. Tall and thin, all arms and legs and elbows, he danced an impatient jig. Then, seeing that the papers had been saved from a spill on the wet pavement, he grinned.

“Sorry!” he said.

“You look it!” growled the man. He nodded at a piece of paper in the boy’s hand. “What you got there? Winnin’ line on the pools or something?”

“Could be!” called the boy over his shoulder—meaning that it could turn out to be as valuable.

Well, you never knew . . .

Apart from such pauses—to apologize, or to pick himself up, or to spit over a railway bridge for luck, or to wait, hopping from one foot to the other, for

the traffic to go by—Frankie Williams ran all the way to Mapper Mundy's house that afternoon. And even when he got there he couldn't keep still. Again he did his jiggling-on-the-spot, as first he hammered at the knocker, then rattled the letter box and finally, after stuffing the piece of paper into his pocket, hammered and rattled simultaneously.

Mapper's sister came to the door.

"Hi, Marion! Will you tell—"

"Will you tell *me* what you're making such a commotion for?" The girl raised her arms to show him her hands and wrists, and waved them about as if to smear the flour that was on them all over his dark cheeks. "Don't you know people might be too busy to rush to the door as soon as some idiot comes trying to knock it down? Eh?"

Frankie gulped back the wisecrack he'd been about to make. There was a delicious smell of baking coming up the hallway, and this meant a chance of sampling some of Marion's special currant buns—if he could manage to get on the right side of her. After such a bad start it could be rather tricky, for although she was only fourteen Marion Mundy could be just as prickly as a real housewife. Indeed, she was a real housewife, in a way, and had been ever since her mother died two years ago.

He sniffed. The smell was driving him crazy. Warm buns, packed with currants that were still hot. Packed so tight with currants that you could hear

them crunch, every bite you took. Melting butter . . .

"Sorry, Marion!"

"And there's dad, trying to sleep!"

Frankie gulped again. He'd forgotten for the moment that Andrew Mundy was an engine driver, often on night work.

"Gosh! I *am* sorry! I haven't woken him up, have I?"

His expression was now very dejected. Marion's softened a little. She raised a hand to her head, leaving traces of flour amongst the yellow hair she pushed back.

"Maybe not. It takes a lot to waken dad, I must say."

"I came to see Mapper—er—" Frankie checked himself, remembering that "Mapper" was a nickname his pal had been given at school, that he was still "Joe" to his family, and that families were often touchy about nicknames. There was the time he'd asked Brian Parkin's mother if their "Piggy" was coming out . . . "I mean Joe. Is he in?"

This was an unnecessary question really. Frankie could see not only Mapper's bike in the hall behind the girl, but an even stronger piece of evidence—the new green imitation suede windcheater with the sheepskin collar, without which Mapper never went anywhere nowadays.

That was why Marion's answer came as a shock.

"He's gone on a long country walk."

"But he—he didn't say anything to me about it! When I left him. Just before dinner."

Frankie couldn't help looking at the windcheater. He'd forgotten all about the scrap of paper now. All he could think about was Marion's message and the feeling that she wasn't telling him the whole truth.

Had Mapper told her to tell him this, he wondered. *Him?* His best pal?

Suddenly, everything seemed to go flat. Even the smell of the buns didn't appeal to him any more.

Marion shrugged her shoulders.

"That's what he told me, anyway. He's gone on a long country walk and doesn't want disturbing."

Frankie frowned.

"Doesn't want *disturbing*? But—"

"Oh, he's mad, all right! I'm only telling you what he said . . . He gets out a map—those *maps*!—spreads it over the table, asks me for a reel of cotton—*cotton*!—and says he's off on a long country walk and doesn't want disturbing. Mad!"

"And so I *don't* want disturbing!" came a voice from a half-open door at the end of the narrow passage. "Tell the man we don't want any brushes today. Or buy one. Only belt up, *will* you! I'm in a mess and I can't concentrate with all this yackerty-yacking going on!"

Marion rolled her eyes upwards.

"There you are!" she murmured. "See what I

mean? Mad!" Then, raising her voice, she called: "It's Frankie!"

"Well that's different, gel!" cried her brother. "Send him in! He might be able to help me!"

Still puzzled, but feeling much happier, Frankie went into the living-room.

It was a very small room, made smaller by a piano that filled the whole of one side and a tall glass-fronted book-case that stood facing it. But despite this overcrowding it was usually very tidy.

Usually . . .

Frankie blinked, trying to decide what it was that gave him the impression that a hurricane had recently swept through there.

The maps scattered about the floor?

The reel of cotton that had fallen there and unravelled itself?

The cups and saucers, teapot and half-empty milk bottle that had been removed from the table and laid on chairs, the piano and the mantelshelf to make room for yet another map, outspread, a large Ordnance Survey map?

Or was it Mapper himself—and the awkward position he was in?

As tall as Frankie, but with bigger bones and very fair hair, he was crouching over the map with one knee on a chair and the other on the table. His face had gone red and shiny. A tuft of hair had fallen

over his forehead. His eyes were blazing blue with anger or annoyance at something on the map. The tip of his tongue was jutting out. And both hands were pressed down on the map, close together, as if he'd caught a snake crawling across it and was pinning it down and daren't move or slacken his grip in case it bit him.

But it was only a piece of cotton.

"What's the matter, man?"

"I'm stuck, man!"

Frankie blinked again.

"How, man?"

"In this gully, man!"

Frankie bent over. It was a map of a moorland district. The masses of brown contour lines would have told him that, even without the names: Midhope Moor, Harden Moor and Langsett Moor. Somewhere on the border of Yorkshire and Derbyshire, he noted, before the sight of Mapper's fingernails—blue and white with pressure—reminded him of his friend's difficulty.

"Which gully?" he asked.

"This, near my left thumb!" groaned Mapper.

Just there, the contour lines were crowded together on either side of a blue line that indicated a stream.

"The path bends back north and I want to go south!"

"What're you so choosy for, man?"

Mapper groaned again.

"Because I'm heading for *here!*" he said, banging with his elbow on the bottom of the map. "This main road here, in red. I can get a lift into Sheffield here."

Frankie shrugged. He pointed to the dotted line of the path along which Mapper had been running the cotton.

"You'll just have to turn back then, and take this fork. *That* should bring you further south."

"Huh!" Mapper straightened up. Still keeping tight hold of the cotton, he pulled it straight and laid it alongside a ruler.

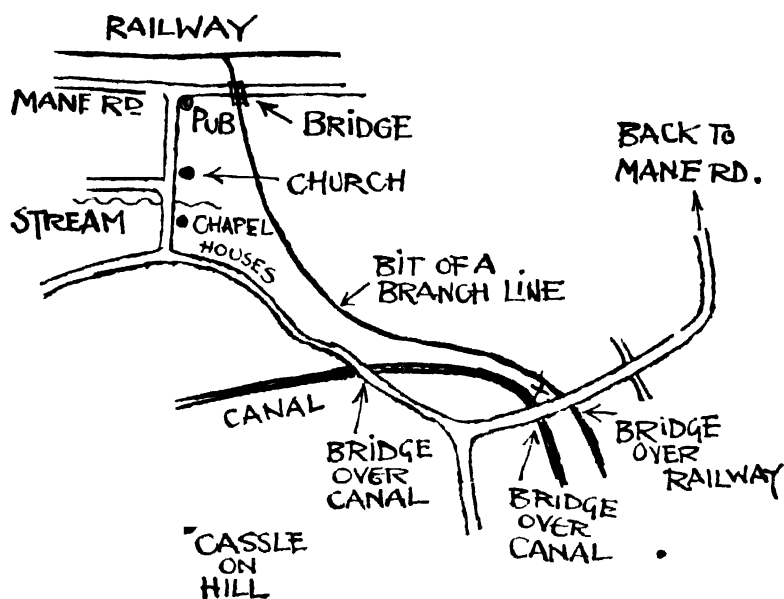
"There," he said. "Over twelve inches . . . Another two and a half . . . Nearly fifteen altogether . . . And at one inch to the mile that's nearly fifteen miles I've done already!" He jabbed his finger at a place called Penistone. "I started here," he said. "I've walked all the way from Penistone station. Fifteen miles, most of it over rough moorland, and I'm nearly dropping . . . Then *you* say turn back and take another fork!"

"Well have a rest, man!"

"It's getting too late! Dark! There's a mist!"

Frankie grinned.

"They'll send a search party for you," he said. He felt in his pockets. "Anyway, never mind that. You're not *really* there, you know. This is a lot more important—*this* map . . . " He unfolded the piece of paper. "And this message . . . "



Mapper sniffed. He didn't seem very impressed with what he saw: a mere sketch-map, roughly done in ink, with untidy lettering and no sign of a key or a scale. Already his eyes were straying back to the much more attractive Ordnance Survey map when Frankie repeated, in a firmer and strangely excited voice: "*And—this—message!*"

Mapper followed the direction of his pal's dark tapping forefinger. The message had been crudely scrawled and the paper was dirty and smudged. He had difficulty in making out some of the words at first, but this soon ceased to bother him when their meaning became clearer.

He read:

It has been hid in spinney about 2½ miles from mane road at X at botom of tallest tree (a Ash) where it forks till its cooler.

He murmured the last word.

“Cooler? . . . ”

Frankie’s eyes and teeth flashed.

“Yes! You know what that means, man? That means it’s hot, whatever it is! And that means—”

“It’s been pinched!”

“Yes! Loot, man!”

“Swag!”

“Stolen property!”

As they found fresh words for it, so it began to grow in value and importance in their minds: from silver candlesticks to diamonds to H-bomb secrets.

“Where d’you get ‘t?” asked Mapper, at last.

“In a library book. Just after dinner. I went for one for dad, about geography. You know. *Fifty Miles Round Nottingham* it was called. He said seeing as we live here, we might as well get to know as much as we can about it—”

“And this was in it?” said Mapper impatiently.

“It fell out.”

Mapper frowned.

“Probably a joke,” he said.

Having voiced this doubt, he began to grow more convinced that it was true.

"A joke," he repeated. "I've heard of these things. Somebody's been having you on."

Frankie shook his head rapidly.

"No! It's no joke, man. I thought it might be a joke, but it isn't."

"What makes you so sure?"

Frankie picked up the piece of paper and tossed it lightly back on to the table.

"Look at it. All greasy, dirty. Been folded up very very tight somewhere—very very tight and little. There's even a smear of blood on it—here—on the back . . . That note's been kept very secret somewhere. It's been passed on. If it had been a joke it would be on clean paper, man . . . Cleaner than this, anyway."

Mapper bent to the smear that Frankie had described as blood. Maybe *that* was stretching it a bit . . . All the same, there was something in what he'd said.

A faintly sour smell seemed to rise from the soiled scrap of paper. That and its grubbiness and the numerous creases where it had been folded, some of them fraying—all these signs spoke of its having been written and secreted in a place that was far more squalid than a public library.

He looked again at the rusty smear and—well—yes—he *could* imagine people fighting over this note.

He sat down to study the crude map more carefully. For the first time, he noticed a few rough pen-

cilled figures at the bottom. A telephone number, perhaps.

"No names," he said. "It could be anywhere."

"Yes, I know!" Frankie was snapping his fingers with excitement. Under the table his feet were dancing again. "But if we draw it more carefully—like in one of these maps of yours—and use the same scale, an inch to the mile, and the same signs—you know, red for main roads and blue for the canal and a cross or something for the church—well, maybe we could match it up!"

Mapper was biting on his thumb.

"You mean look through my maps and see where it fits?"

Frankie flicked his fingers and drummed with his feet as if listening to a top-speed pop-record.

"Yes! yes! Come *on*, man!"



FRANKIE SAYS:

Well, I certainly went to the right person. Joe loves maps. He reads them the way most kids read comics.

One day, old Smiggy, our history master, told us that the old name for the map of the world—the old Latin name that they wrote at the bottom—was *Mappa Mundi*. *Mappa Mundi*! We nearly killed ourselves laughing, man! Even old Smiggy had a bit of a smile when he saw what we were laughing at. Joe had already shown that maps interested him more than anything else in any other subject, and from that day on we've called him Mapper. Mapper Mundy . . .

Anyway, as I was saying, I'd certainly gone to the right person. At the time all this happened, during the half-term holiday last autumn, he'd still got a lot to learn about maps. But he was dead keen and he'd already built up quite a collection of these One-Inch Ordnance Survey maps, and I was hoping he'd have one with this place on it. Old Pete, the geography

master, had given him one as a prize for the most improved worker in the form; he'd got one of Nottingham, naturally; and there were some he'd bought when he'd been on his holidays.

Mapper's ambition, though, is to have the lot. All the One-Inch Ordnance Survey maps for England, Wales and Scotland!

"How many are there altogether?" I asked him, one day.

"A hundred and ninety," he said.

"It's going to cost you a packet at 5/6d. a time, isn't it?" I said.

He hadn't thought of that before. He nearly did his nut when we worked it out! Of course, we might have made a mistake somewhere, so I'll not tell you *exactly* what we got it to come to. But, man, it was a lot!

- Work it out yourself and see what you make it.

Another thing he hadn't really thought about was where he was going to put them all. I mean, I know they'd fit in a bookcase fairly easy, all folded up—but what he was thinking of doing was spreading them all out, side by side. All England, Scotland and Wales on the floor!

"Listen, man!" I said. "I've been looking up the figures. From the top of Scotland to the bottom of England it's roughly 600 miles. And from east to west, at its widest, it's about 350 miles."

“So?” he said.

“Well, these maps are an inch to the mile. Every inch stands for a mile—O.K.?”

“O.K.,” he said.

“O.K., then,” I said. “So all spread out the way you want them, they’d stretch 600 inches one way and 350 inches the other!”

“So?” he said again.

“So where you going to put them, man?” I said.

“I was thinking of the big bedroom,” he said.

The big bedroom!

“A *‘big’* big bedroom *you* must have got!” I said. “You work it out. 600 inches by 350 inches. Work it out in yards and feet!”

He did—with a bit of help from me and Marion—and that shook him, too!

But try it for yourself. You work it out and then see:

if *you* have a room big enough at home;

- if your back garden would be big enough;
- if your form room at school would be big enough;

if they could be spread out comfortably *anywhere* in your school without having to move a lot of furniture or apparatus;

which way round you’d have to put them in any of these places so that North on the map actually did point North.



This **scale** business is important. One inch representing one mile is a *very* convenient scale—dead easy to use. I should hate to think of the mess poor old Mapper would be in if it was something like $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches to the mile—of all the sums he'd get wrong when he looked at a map and tried to work out how many miles from one place to another!

With the One-Inch map it's simple. First, he gets a **piece of cotton** and runs it along the road or path he's measuring. This is so that he can take into account all the twists and turns.

Then, when he's covered the whole distance that way, he takes the cotton off, straightens it out, holds it against a ruler and sees how many inches it has taken.

And because each inch represents a mile, there's his answer: so many inches, same number of miles.

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You try it. For example, get a One-Inch map of the place you live in and find out:

- how far it is from the main railway station in your town or village to the main station in the next town or village, (a) by rail, (b) by road.
- If you haven't a map handy, find out the distances between various places on some of the maps in this book.

There *are* other ways of doing this besides using cotton.

You can use a pair of **dividers**, setting the points a quarter of an inch apart and going over the route with them in little steps. If it takes 40 steps, that will give you $40 \times \frac{1}{4}$ inches, which is 10 inches, which represents 10 miles.

Another way is to use some **tracing paper with a couple of pins**. Rule a straight line on the paper—a fairly long one. Stick a pin through the beginning of the line and pin the paper to the map at the starting point of the journey. Then swing the paper round so that the line follows the first bit of road before it bends.

Stick the *second* pin through the line at the point where the road bends.

Remove the first pin and swivel the paper so that the line continues to follow the road to the *next* bend.

Go on like that till the end of the journey and measure the distance along the straight line between the first pin-hole and the last. If it comes to 5 inches, the distance will be roughly 5 miles—and so on.

(Yes, I know! The trouble with this one is that if there are a lot of little bends in the road it nearly drives *you* round the bend—taking pins out and sticking them in and making sure the paper doesn't slip. I've seen Mapper nearly go crazy doing this.)

The simplest way is to use a **special instrument**, a little wheel thing that you just run along the route

on the map. This clocks the distance like a cyclo-meter. So many complete turns of the wheel equal so many inches, and so many inches represent so many miles. It's called an **opisometer** if you're thinking of getting one, though Mapper says cotton is just as good and a heck of a lot cheaper.

But to get back to this sketch-map I found in the library book. I still think it was a pretty good idea of mine to copy it out, using the scale of one inch to the mile and all the proper signs, and then to see if it matched up with any of the places on Mapper's maps.

- What about you having a go? You'll find all the signs (or **symbols**, as old Pete calls them) facing p. 72. Then, when you've drawn your one inch to the mile version of the sketch-map, turn to page 32, and see how it compares with the one Mapper and I drew that afternoon.

2 *The Scribbled Figures*

"It's all right saying draw it again to a one-inch scale," said Mapper. "But how do we *start*? I mean, how do we know what scale the bloke who drew this was using? If any?"

Frankie's feet were still dancing. Now they positively stamped on the floor.

"Easy, man! This place marked X is two-and-a-half miles from the main road, isn't it? He tells us that in the message. O.K., then. We've got to make that road leading to it about two-and-a-half *inches*."

"I know! I know!" grunted Mapper. "Don't you try to tell me about maps, *please*!"

Frankie gaped at him.

"But, man, you *asked* me!"

Mapper frowned haughtily.

"I was only testing you . . ."

Before Frankie could think of a reply, Mapper got up and began to rummage in one of the drawers on which the book-case stood. Old knitting needles

rattled, an empty sticking-plaster tin clattered to the floor.

"Paper . . . " Mapper was muttering, as he burrowed under the bundles of string, used Christmas cards, beads and bits of sealing wax. "Paper . . . "

He brought out a crumpled writing pad. Then:

"Crayons . . . " he growled, reminding Frankie of a dog scratching for a long-buried bone. He slammed the drawer shut and tried another. "Crayons . . . " he muttered. Finally he roared the word: "CRAYONS! . . . *Where's the crayons, Marion?*"

"They're where you put them!" came his sister's voice, unperturbed, from the kitchen.

"*That's no answer!*" bawled Mapper. "*Everytime I—oh!—hm!—yes . . .*" He grinned rather lamely at Frankie. "I think they're upstairs," he whispered. "Won't be a minute . . . "

When all the equipment had been assembled, Frankie picked up the ruler and said:

"I think we should start with a square about two inches each side."

"Huh?" Mapper was busy sharpening one of the crayons.

"On this sketch-map the road runs from the top left-hand corner to the bottom right—"

"North-west to south-east!" jeered Mapper, coming back to the table.

He tried to take the ruler, but Frankie pulled it out of his reach and said: "Anyway, if we had it

running that way across a two inch square it would just come to about two-and-a-half inches, with all the twists and turns and that. It would give us the right scale. And—”

“I know, I know . . . ” said Mapper, suddenly seizing the ruler. “Thanks!”

Quickly, before Frankie could snatch it back, he began to draw the square.

“Now shut up a minute,” he murmured, thoughtfully tapping the end of the ruler on his teeth. Then, after a few moments, he said: “Yes . . . We’ll start with the main road. Seeing he *calls* it a main road, it’s almost certain to be an A road, in red.”

He glanced at the key at the bottom of the Ordnance Survey map that he’d been studying earlier. Frankie bent over it with him.

“It *could* be a B road, in brown,” he said.

“Yes,” said Mapper. “But there are usually more A roads than B’s.” He waved the ruler at the outspread map and, true enough, there did seem to be a wider network of red. “We’ll take a chance, anyway.”

He drew a short red line in the top left-hand corner of the square, running roughly parallel to the top.

“And this one branching off it, leading to the loot or whatever it is,” he continued, “well, there again it’s not likely to be another main road or he’d have said. But seeing it goes through this village it won’t be a *very* poor one—you know . . . ”

"Not like these they mark in white, no," agreed Frankie. "It'll be the medium sort, yellow—"

Just in time, he managed to reach that crayon before his pal.

"Go on, then!" grumbled Mapper. "Only be careful!"

Frankie drew the first part of the side road. Then he looked at the key.

"Hm! There's no sign for *that*!" he said.

"What?"

"The pub at the corner. You'd think they'd show pubs by putting little black bottles or something."

Mapper pulled the piece of paper towards him.

"Never mind," he said. "It'll be marked as a building, anyway."

And with his pencil he drew a small grey square at the corner.

"What sort of a church shall we put?" asked Frankie, pointing to the signs in the key. "With a spire? Or just a tower? Or without either? He doesn't say on the sketch-map."

Mapper frowned. Then his face brightened.

"Well, most churches do have either a spire or a tower. And seeing that one's marked by a little black circle with a cross on top and the other's a little black *square* with a cross, they don't look all that different on a map. We'll make it a spire."

While Mapper marked this, Frankie picked up the blue crayon.

"We mustn't forget the stream under the road by the church."

Mapper's hand went to the crayons. Then, noticing that Frankie had beaten him to it, he shrugged his broad bony shoulders.

"What bit of it we know about," he said. "He didn't show much of it on the sketch-map."

"I'll mark it anyway. Just under the road . . . here . . . It'll help."

"The chapel's easy," said Mapper. "There's not many of them with either spires *or* towers." He drew a plain black cross at the side of the yellow road. "And these houses on the corner—we'll have *them* in," he said, lightly shading a narrow strip of grey.

"I've been wondering about the railway," said Frankie.

"Take my advice, lad—you couldn't pick a better career!"

The two boys turned to see Mr. Mundy standing in the doorway, a heavy blue overcoat draped over his pyjamas.

"So long as you don't have a son who comes barging into your bedroom and waking you up when you've been on nights!" he added.

"Sorry, dad! We're just on the track of some stolen goods and I had to find some crayons."

"Stolen goods? *Crayons?*" Mr. Mundy blinked. Then he scratched his thin sandy hair and yawned. "I'm too tired for riddles," he said. "Any tea in the pot?"

There wasn't, so he took it off the piano and went softly grumbling into the kitchen. They heard Marion greet him. There came an extra strong whiff of baking buns and the slam of the oven door.

"Career?" said Frankie. "What's he mean? I want to be a radio operator."

"He got it wrong. When you said you were wondering about the railway."

"Oh, that!" Frankie bent once more to the map. "Yes . . . well that's going to be a bit of a headache."

Mapper agreed.

There were four types of railway line marked on the key of the Ordnance Survey map: multiple track, single track, narrow gauge, and a special symbol to cover mineral lines, sidings and tramways. The line that ran parallel to the main road was likely to be in the first category, certainly—at least a double track—and they marked it accordingly with a thick black line. But what sort of mark should they use for this "bit of a branch line," they wondered. The words "bit of" seemed to suggest a single track of some sort. Would it be an ordinary single track branch line, leading to some other villages? Or would it be a siding?

"Too long for a siding," murmured Frankie. "See. It goes on past the place where the stuff's hidden."

"And I don't suppose it'll be narrow gauge—

that's very rare in this country," said Mapper.
"What's a mineral line?"

"One that leads to a lemonade factory."

"*Very* funny! You come here, wanting my advice, picking my brains, borrowing my maps, and all you can do is—"

"Sorry! Sorry! A mineral line's one that leads to a mine, I suppose."

Mapper nodded.

"Yes, well—seeing there's no colliery mentioned, that lets that out. We'll make it just an ordinary single track line. Black and white, like a Belisha beacon . . ."

The canal presented no difficulties, and when Frankie had drawn this in (having had the foresight to hang on to the blue crayon after doing the small section of the stream earlier) they gazed with a mixture of satisfaction and doubt at the map they had redrawn.

"There's something—"

"The castle!" cried Mapper.

"It may not come on to this bit of the map," said Frankie, a little annoyed at not having spotted the omission first. "A castle on a hill you could see for miles, man!"

"We'll show it, all the same," said Mapper. "It's one of our best clues! . . . And there's another thing. The fact that he thinks it's worth mentioning the hill it's on shows that it must be pretty flat all

round here. There won't be many contour lines."

"O.K., then. Let me draw the castle. I'm good at castles."

"*Draw* it? That's not how they're marked!"

"Not little black castles?"

"No."

"Man, they ought to be, then!"

"They just write the word 'castle' in this niggly old-fashioned writing." Mapper pointed to the key. Then he hesitated. "Go on, then, if you want. You write it. I'll do a few contours."

Carefully, Frankie wrote the word in letters as nearly like those used in the key as he could make them.

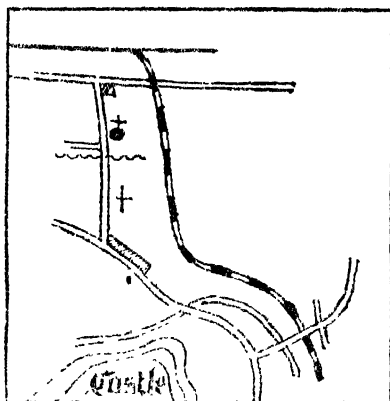
"Huh! See why you let me do this!" he grumbled.

But when he had finished and Mapper had scrawled some brown loops around it, Frankie couldn't help feeling pleased with the result.

"Mind you, the hill might be a different shape altogether," explained Mapper, "but a few contour lines just here'll give the general impression . . ."

"Yes!" murmured Frankie, beginning to drum with his feet again. "Those diamonds are as good as dug up, man! I wonder what the reward is?"

There was no denying it: their version of the map did look very promising. They felt rather proud of it. There were one or two gaps, of course, but it seemed to be sufficiently detailed to give them something solid to work on. They even began to feel



The sketch-map re drawn by Mapper and Frankie.

sorry for the man who had hidden the swag. Poor fool, trying to protect his secret by leaving out the name of the village! But how was he to know that the sketch would fall into the hands of two such experts?

But when they came to try to match it up with a similar section of one of Mapper's maps, their feelings of triumph began to fade. Mapper's frown got deeper and deeper until his eyes were just a pair of blue slits and Frankie stopped wondering about the chances of getting a job as a radio operator at Scotland Yard.

The trouble was that the One-Inch Ordnance Survey maps were so big and the re-drawn section

so small. And it was worse than trying to fit a tiny piece into a jig-saw puzzle. In such a case you can at least see where the empty spaces are. This, however, was like having a duplicate piece and trying to find where its twin was in the *completed* puzzle—and a large completed puzzle at that, not one of those little half-crown things that can be built up on a tea-tray.

Frankie began to see networks of red roads and swirling brown contour lines whenever he closed his eyes. Grunting and muttering, Mapper ran the small two-inch section up and down the outspread maps—up and down, systematically, as if it were a lift, up and down the grid lines . . .

When they had done this with every map in his collection, Mapper sat back and glared at the table.

Frankie's feet were quite still now.

"And there's a hundred and ninety One-Inch Ordnance Survey maps altogether! That leaves a hundred and eighty two!"

Mapper grunted.

"Yes—and a lot depends on how accurate the bloke's sketch-map was to begin with. I mean it might be all cockeyed. The place might be on one of these maps of mine, after all, only we've missed it because he'd drawn it all cockeyed."

"I don't suppose we've made a mistake, copying it?"

"Course we haven't!" snapped Mapper. "Maybe

the red road should be a brown one and this single track a double—we've just got to take a chance on those things. But the general grouping—the way the roads and railway and canal run—*that* should tell us, and I've not seen anything like it on any of these maps. Nothing at all!"

When Marion entered the room shortly afterwards, she was frowning too. She had a problem of her own. She was wondering what was the matter with her cooking.

It looked all right. It seemed to her to smell all right. Her father had had no complaints to make about it. Before going up to the bathroom to shave, he had helped himself to three of the buns, despite her warning about what these did to his stomach when eaten so hot. But this was the first time she had never been pestered by her brother or Frankie to let *them* have a sample. Most times they would have come clamouring for a taste even before the buns had been brought out of the oven, insisting that she was leaving them in too long and that they'd be burnt—as if she didn't know exactly how long they required! Today, however, three trayfuls had been withdrawn and put on the wire-mesh stands to cool without a single interruption.

"Well," she said, stopping in the doorway and allowing fresh waves of the smell of warm buns to

enter the room, "you do look a pair of miseries, I must say! What's up?"

Mapper lay sideways in an armchair, bent double, slumped, his legs dangling, his arms folded, his chin on his chest. Frankie was still sitting at the table, with his chin cupped in his hands, staring moodily at a pokerwork motto on the opposite wall which read: *East West, Home's Best.* †

"I'm talking to you!" said Marion. "What's the matter?"

Frankie sighed. He continued to stare at the motto.

"Nothing . . ." he murmured.

Mapper didn't even reply.

Marion pushed back the constantly falling lock of hair.

"You sit there, looking like a pair of—of—of *cooks* who've put salt in the pudding instead of sugar, and you say nothing's the matter! I don't believe it! Have you broken something? Something valuable?"

She looked round suspiciously.

Just like a real housewife! Frankie was thinking again. *You'd never believe she was only fourteen!*

But maps were men's work.

"You wouldn't understand," said Frankie.

"And it's nothing to do with you, anyway!" grunted Mapper.

Marion's eyes widened with indignation.

"All *right*, then!" she said, thrusting out the plate

of buns she was carrying and then drawing them back. "If that's your attitude, these buns have nothing to do with *you!*"

She turned and hooked her foot round the door, ready to pull it to after her.

"Hey! No, Marion!" came her brother's voice.

"We didn't mean it, gal!" urged Frankie. He was at her side in one leap, trying to steer her back.

"Just one apiece, Marion!"

"No!"

She tried to wrench herself from Frankie's gentle grip without dislodging any of the buns.

"We'll tell you, Marion! We were only kidding!"

She gave her brother a freezing look.

"I don't want to know, thank you! I'm not interested in stupid map games."

"But it isn't, Marion!" said Frankie. "It isn't a game. It's real. It's—"

He stopped when Mapper nudged him sharply and said:

"She wouldn't understand, anyway."

Marion turned.

"Who wouldn't?"

Mapper pretended to look doubtful—though he took great care to do it politely.

"It's—it's something you need a lot of training for. Unless you're very intelligent—you know, *really* intelligent . . . " He stopped and stared at her

thoughtfully. "Still . . . you're not exactly dim, I must admit . . ."

"Thank you *very* much!" said Marion in a sarcastic voice.

But her expression had softened considerably.

"Look," said Mapper. "Just fetch the butter and a couple of knives and we'll explain. Pull up a chair for her, Frankie."

While the boys talked and ate and pointed to the grubby scrap of paper and the neat little map they'd drawn themselves, Marion listened carefully. She was determined to show them that she could understand the business just as fully as they could, and—to prove it and to make sure—she interrupted them occasionally with what she hoped were sensible questions. Indeed, by the time they had finished and had lapsed once more into a gloomy silence, she found she could understand it so well that she too was feeling bitterly disappointed about the dead-end they seemed to have arrived at.

She reached out for the sketch-map, drawing it towards her by the very tip of one corner because of its dirtiness. She studied it for a few moments. Then:

"What are these numbers about?" she asked, pointing to the scribbled figures at the bottom. "Maybe they'll help."

Mapper shrugged.

“Just doodling. Telephone number, maybe. Don’t know. They’re not important.”

Marion nodded thoughtfully, not quite convinced.

“Eight-three-nine, three-six-three . . . ” she murmured. “Bit long for a phone number . . . or a car number . . . ”

Frankie sighed. He’d thought of all that himself. It didn’t seem to lead anywhere. He wondered if she’d be bringing some more buns in. Those had been good. Noticing some crumbs on the outspread Ordnance Survey map whose key they had been referring to, he began idly to brush them off.

Then he stopped, having caught sight of a similar row of figures printed there, in a note at the foot of the map, next to the key.

“Hey! Just a minute!” he exclaimed, snatching at the map, looking first at the figures and the note and then at the pencilled row on the sketch-map. “Why, man! . . . gal! . . . *This could tell us the exact spot!*”



FRANKIE SAYS:

Yes. I was on to something there, all right!

As I said before, Mapper had still got a lot to learn about maps at the time when all this happened. And one of the things he didn't know anything about was the **grid system**.

The idea's quite simple, really, but it does look a bit dry and complicated, the way they set it out at the bottom of the Ordnance Survey maps and on the inside of the cardboard covers. I suppose that's why Mapper hadn't bothered to study it. He thought it had something to do with the *electricity* grid system, which is a different thing altogether.

But this *map* grid system—it's not only simple. It's important, man! Really important. It's the surest, quickest way of pin-pointing a place on a map.

When you know how . . .

Take a look at a One-Inch Ordnance Survey map. See those thin black straight lines? Those that run up and down and from side to side at regular intervals, making a pattern of little squares? I used

to think they were lines of latitude and longitude, but they're not. Those are the **grid reference lines** and each one has a number in the margin of the sheet.

If you did what Mapper's always wanted to do and laid out every One-Inch O.S. map of England, Scotland and Wales side by side, you would see that the map-makers have covered the whole country with them. There isn't a place in the whole country that doesn't come into one of these little squares.

And that's an awful lot of lines! Still looking at the outspread maps of the whole country, you'd see nearly 700 lines running downwards, from top to bottom (north to south), and nearly 1,300 running across, from side to side (west to east).

Now, suppose you want to **pin-point a place on one of these maps** by giving it a quick reference number. This is what you do:

1. See which is the number of the first line to the *west* of the place (the *left* of it, if you're looking at the map the right way up).
2. O.K.? Then write this number down. (Let's suppose it's 83.)
3. Now see the number of the first line to the *south* of it (*under* it, if you're still looking at the map the right way up).
4. O.K.? Then write that number down, too. (Let's suppose it's 36).

The numbers 83-36 will now tell us, or anybody else who wants to know, that the place is in the small square whose left-hand side is formed by line 83 and whose base is on line 36.

But this still isn't exactly a *pin-point* reference, is it? More like a *cricket-stump-point* reference, if you see what I mean! All right— so to make it even more accurate, you concentrate on the square it is in and do this:

1. Imagine the square is divided into *tenths*, each way.
2. Estimate how many tenths *eastwards* (from left to right) this place is.
3. Write this figure down. (Let's suppose it's nearly at the other side—9 tenths away from line 83).
4. Now estimate how far *up* the square the place is, how many tenths *northwards*.
5. Write this figure down. (Let's suppose it's just over a quarter of the way up—3 tenths above line 36).

Right. We now have figures that will really pin-point the place: 839 363, which means "9 tenths to the east of line 83, and 3 tenths to the north of line 36." The number of tenths always comes after the number of the line.

Just for practice, see if you can give reference numbers for:

- your home;
- your school;
- the nearest railway station;
- a road junction near your home;
- a railway bridge;
- a post office near your home.

The number 839363, of course, is the reference number scrawled on the sketch-map we were puzzling over that afternoon.

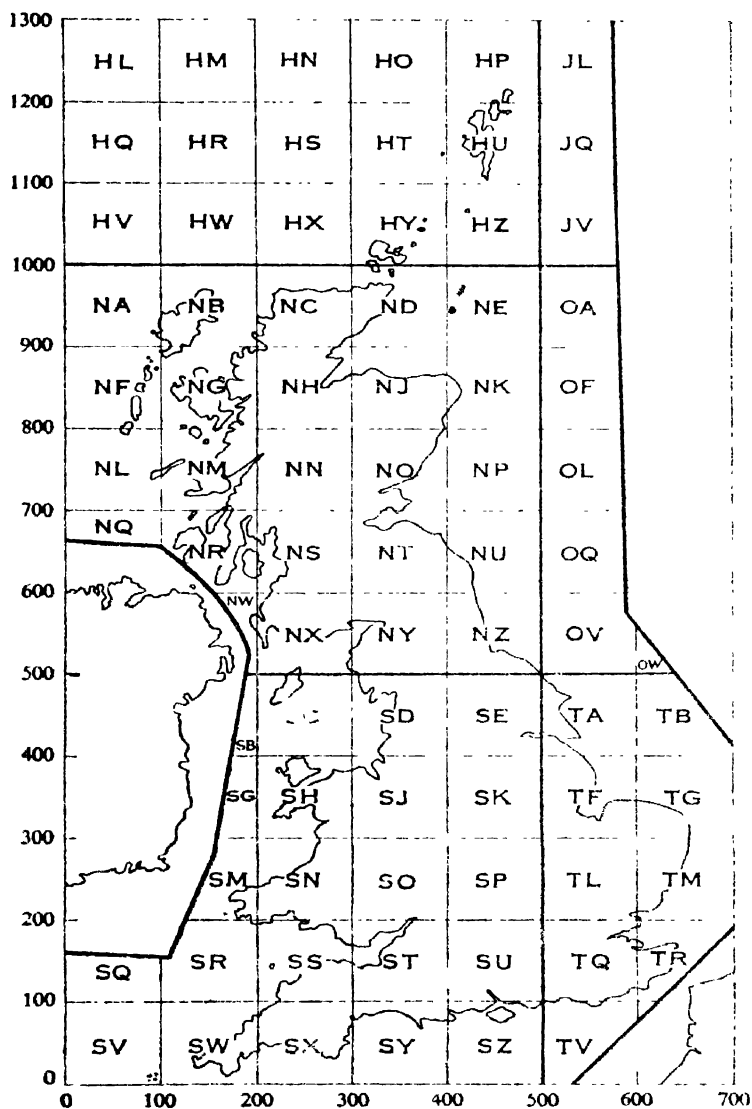
“We’re laughing now, man!” I said to Mapper.

But we weren’t quite as lucky as we thought. Oh, no!

As I said before, over the whole country there are nearly 700 of these lines running one way and nearly 1,300 running the other. Well, to save space and simplify things, the map-makers only print in the margins the figures up to a hundred. So 83 could be just that, or 183, or 283, and so on, up to 683. And 36 could be just 36, or 136, or 236, and so on, up to 1236.

So, you see, the reference number 839363 could fit quite a number of points up and down the country, on quite a number of maps.

Naturally, the map-makers know about this, and they give each area a pair of code letters, like SH, SJ, SK and so on. They’re all printed on the diagram on the inside covers of the maps (see opposite).



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Simplified diagram of the National Grid

And, just to make sure, they also tell you which code letters apply to the particular map you're working on, printing these letters in a square to themselves just under the scale at the bottom. This enables you to give the **full grid reference**, SD 839363, or whatever it is, which **applies to one point only in the whole of the country**.

Well, as I say, the person who'd drawn the sketch-map had left the code letters out of his reference, and this was a bit of a nuisance. But the figures did give us something definite to go on. Instead of running our own version of the sketch-map up and down the Ordnance Survey maps again and hoping we'd spot somewhere similar, we could now go straight to the places on the maps suggested by the reference numbers and study them carefully.

3 *The Angry Stranger*

Equipped with the number 839363, the three friends turned back to Mapper's collection of Ordnance Survey maps with renewed eagerness, and to their delight they found that four of them would contain that number.

There was one of the Torquay area, which Mapper had got while on holiday there. There was one of the Blackburn and Burnley area, which his Uncle Ernest from Accrington had given him. There was one of the Stafford area, and one of the Market Weighton area, which Mapper had got when he and Marion had gone to stay with their Aunt Alice at York.*

"Stafford's nearest, let's hope that *that's* the one," he said, spreading out the map.

Breathing loudly through his nose and slowly licking his lips, he found the area in which the point occurred. Frankie followed him closely.

* O.S. Sheet numbers: Torquay, 188; Blackburn and Burnley, 95; Stafford, 119; Market Weighton, 98.

"Well, there's a road going in the right direction, but it's an A road, a red one, not yellow," murmured Frankie. He glanced from their own sketch-map to the Ordnance Survey sheet and back again, his hopes sinking slightly. "And there isn't one along the top . . ."

"No," grunted Mapper. "And the point itself, I make it come to 'about here,'" he said, putting the point of his pencil at the side of the main road.

"And where's the canal?" said Marion.

"Or the branch railway?" added Frankie.

"No," said Mapper, folding the sheet. • "*That's* not it!"

Marion picked out the Torquay map.

"How we're going to go all this way to check up if it *is* the right one, I don't know," she said. "But we'll see."

Mapper laughed.

"Yes! We'll see all right, gel! We'll see the sea!"

He was running one finger along line 36 and one up line 83.

"Splash!" he said, when they met. "There's the spot!"

And there it was indeed, about three-quarters of a mile from a rocky headland called Start Point—out to sea.

"Start *Point*?" cried Frankie. "Man, we'd better start swimmin'!"

Still grinning, they turned to the map of the Blackburn and Burnley area.

"The signs are a bit different on this," Mapper said. "It's an old one, about ten years old."

"It's *called* new, anyway!" said Marion. "Look: the 'New Popular Edition'."

"It was new *then*," growled Mapper impatiently. "Not now."

"Well why don't they call these later ones the *Newest* then?" said Marion, flushing angrily. "The *Newest* Popular Edition instead of—of—" She picked up the Torquay map again and read the description. "Instead of 'Seventh Series'?"

"Why don't you belt up?" snapped Mapper.

"Er—what's the difference?" asked Frankie, anxious to avoid a brother and sister squabble and get on with the job of tracking down the loot.

"I was only asking!" Marion snapped back at her brother.

"I mean what's the difference in the signs?" persisted Frankie.

Contenting himself with a final glare at Marion, Mapper turned to Frankie.

"On the old ones, all sorts of roads are marked brown, not just the B roads. All roads that are marked yellow on the latest maps—the *Seventh Series*," he added, giving Marion a challenging frown, as if to tell her not to start all *that* again—"all those yellow roads are marked brown on this."

"Hm! What else?" asked Frankie, staring at the older map, trying to pick something out for himself.

"Buildings and that. In towns and villages—"

"Oh, yes!" Frankie could see now what was really one of the most striking differences.

"They're all shaded with a thick black on this, not that bluey-grey they use now," continued Mapper. "Those are the main differences, but we'll still be able to tell if this is the right place, don't worry!"

He put their sketch-map alongside the area that contained point 839363. Frankie's feet began to tap when he caught sight of a road—a brown one—running in roughly the same direction as the yellow on their own map. If they were *all* shown in brown in the old editions, this might be it!

But:

"No castle," said Mapper.

"*Two* canals, though," said Marion.

"Wrong direction," said Mapper.

"And no branch line," sighed Frankie.

They turned to the last of the four. No one seemed eager to put this one to the test.

Then Marion brightened.

"If it *is* on this," she said, "we'll be able to stay with Aunt Alice a day or two while we investigate."

"*If!*" grunted Mapper.

He had opened the map and was staring gloomily at the place in question.

"There's a canal, anyway," said Marion.

"Yes, and that's about all!" said Mapper. "In the wrong direction, too . . . "

"And there's *still* no branch line," said Frankie.

"Nice names round there," murmured Marion. "Look: *Ladies' Parlour, Duck Nest, Land of Nod*—oh, and look: *Rascal Moor!* Wouldn't that be just right? I mean if someone had hidden some loot *there*. Some crooks . . . *rascals* . . . you know . . . "

She tailed off. The boys were staring coldly at her.

"*If!*" said Mapper again. "*If!*"

"Are those all the maps you've got?" asked Frankie, hoping that some had been overlooked.

"All I got with this eight-three-nine-what's-it reference, yes . . . "

Mapper's voice echoed Frankie's despondency.

On his way home that afternoon Frankie's dejection increased even further.

It was getting dark. Heavy black clouds rolled slowly over the city, making the street-lamps and the lights in the shop windows seem brighter than they usually were at this time of the day. There was a cold wind, too. Whether it was a north, south, east or west wind Frankie couldn't tell. Mapper might have been able to, but all Frankie knew was that it was a cold one. A *corner* wind, then, if it had to have a name. Any corner. And there were a few drops of rain in it, every now and then.

He pulled up the collar of his jacket and dug his

hands deep into his trouser pockets. His fingers touched the piece of paper that had been the cause of so much excitement earlier, but he felt no tingle run up his arm now. As he trudged along, head down, not even bothering to spit over the railway bridge for luck, he wondered what could have made him get so excited about the map. It stood to sense that it couldn't *really* refer to loot. Things like that never happened in real life. Not to Frankie Williams, anyway.

No; as Mapper had said right at the beginning, it was probably just a joke. Or a game—a kind of treasure hunt. Maybe it was something to do with the Scouts or the Army Cadets. Maybe it had been organized by a car club, as a kind of week-end rally. He'd heard of such things.

He pulled it out and looked at it in the light of a sweet-shop window. *It has been hid . . . at X . . . tallest tree (a Ash) . . . cooler . . .* The words seemed to jeer at him now. He suddenly thought of those chalk lines on walls—he'd drawn them himself—going for hundreds of yards, with *Follow this line* written at one end and *You are daft* at the other. Kids' stuff!

With a grunt of disgust, he screwed the paper up and tossed it into the bin outside the shop. That was where it belonged. Amongst the ice-cream wrappers and lolly-sticks and other rubbish.

Turning the corner of his own street, he suddenly



brightened up at the sight of the car. He couldn't remember ever seeing such a wide radiator grill. It was like a giant mouth-organ. And it seemed to be grinning at him—grinning a great big gleaming grin that nearly stretched the whole width of the cobbled street. Gleaming even in the shadows.

It was an American car, he guessed. But when he realized it was standing outside his own door, he forgot to investigate it more closely—to see what make it was, and how fast it could go, and whether

it had a left-hand drive. A new excitement had come surging through his limbs.

Maybe it was his Uncle Warren from Ladbroke Grove, London! Maybe the club he'd started had suddenly begun to do well! He'd always said that the first thing he'd do would be buy a car and go touring the country. Was this—? Could it be—?

With a grin that matched the car's, Frankie danced into the house.

"Here he is now."

His father's voice told him they were in the back living-room. He crashed open the door.

"Hi, Uncle War—"

He stopped short. The man standing with his back to the fire as if he *was* a relative was tall but white, and a stranger. He was well-dressed, very well-dressed. He was wearing a short light-grey overcoat of some very soft rich-looking material and on the table was a hard green hat with a narrow curly brim.

He was watching Frankie closely, without smiling.

At first, Frankie thought he looked rather dignified—with a long pale face, little mouth and a big chin with a dimple in it. But only at first . . . Perhaps it was the way his eyes sloped downwards away from his long nose that tended to spoil this appearance of dignity. They made him look sly. And there was certainly nothing dignified about the way he spoke—in a quick, high-pitched, nagging voice, strangely coarse.

“You got this out the library, lad?”

He waved his bunched pigskin gloves towards the table. For the first time, Frankie noticed the book near the hat: *Fifty Miles Round Nottingham*.

His heart quickened.

“Er—yes . . . Yes . . . Just today . . . ”

“Find anything in it, did yer? Eh? Well? Did yer?”

Frankie opened his mouth, shut it, then opened it again, without managing to utter a sound.

“You’re flusterin’ the boy, sir. He excites easy, very easy . . . ”

His father’s voice was a great contrast. It was soft and slow and deep and mellow. And looking at the two men, Frankie suddenly saw where the real dignity lay—despite his father’s cheap tartan shirt and the baggy bus conductor’s trousers.

“He’s not the only one!” the stranger was saying. “And I got sommerk to get het up about! That paper, that paper was very valuable—to me. Not to nobody else, mind you, but to me it was very valuable.” He turned to Frankie. “Did yer find it, ch? In the book? Did yer?”

“A—a map?” Frankie blurted out.

The man looked relieved. An eager gleam came into his eyes, then died out, leaving them looking slyer than ever.

“Yes, son—a map. I been telling yer dad, here. I’m a writer, sort of, and that map’s part of a play

I'm writing for the telly, see, the telly. It's all built round that map, the play . . . Where is it? Come on . . . ”

Behind the gold-rimmed glasses, Mr Williams's eyes looked worried and sympathetic. He stroked his thin beard anxiously as he watched his son's face. But Frankie wasn't fooled, not for a second.

All the same, his hand had gone instinctively to his pocket. After all, it wasn't his property.

Then he remembered.

“Oh, gosh!”

The man stepped forward.

“What?”

“I—I threw it away!”

Now it was the man's turn not to believe what he was being told. His eyes had widened.

“You . . . ? You . . . ?” Then a sneer came to the little mouth, and a cold vicious look crept into the eyes. “Where? Where yer throw it away? *Where? Eh?*”

“I didn't think it was important,” mumbled Frankie. “Just a joke or something.”

The man's head jerked up.

“A joke! A *joke*, he says! Why, you . . . ” He stopped, closed his eyes for a second, then continued in a much lower, wheedling tone. “*Where*, lad? Where yer throw it? Eh? Come *on*, think . . . ” He stared intently at Frankie, a strained smile on his

face. Then his control gave way. "*Think, blast yer!*" he cried.

Mr Williams frowned, taking off his glasses.

"Sir, I really must ask you not to shout like that."

The man scowled at him, but when he continued it was once again in a quieter tone.

"Look," he said, taking out a thick wallet. "I'm prepared to make it worth your while, kiddo. I'll *pay* you if you tell me where it is." He had begun to withdraw a ten shilling note. Suddenly he stuffed it back. "I'll—look—there's a quid, *two* quid for yer if you get that map back!"

Frankie was now fully determined to say nothing. He shook his head, trying to look puzzled.

"I—I just *threw* it away. Somewhere in the street."

His father cleared his throat.

"Then I think you ought to go and look for it, Frankie . . . Sir, if you will give us your address, please, we can maybe send it round if he finds it."

"My address? Well—er— I'm only here temp'ry. I—I'll call round later."

Frankie was now pretending to be doubtful. He looked at his shoes and shook his head.

"O.K.," he muttered. "But I can't promise anything."

The man gave him a long hard look as he reached forward to pick up his hat. His breath smelt of onions.

"Can you remember what was on it, then?"

Frankie shrugged.

"Can't *you*?" he asked. "It's your map!"

The man's eyes blinked rapidly. It was as if the boy had slapped his face.

When he spoke it was still in a low voice, but there was nothing wheedling about it now.

"I'll see you again!" he said.

He went without saying good afternoon, without saying anything else at all.

Frankie's father came back from letting him out.

"He's awful upset!" he sighed.

Frankie nodded. He was listening. Presently he heard the slam of the car door and the sound of the engine.

"Well don't just stand there, son!" urged his father. "Don't you think you'd better go along to the library? It might come back to you—where you threw it away . . ."

The sound of the car gradually faded. There came the muffled blare of a horn. Then silence.

Frankie came to life.

"Don't worry, Pop! I'm going now!" he cried.

But it wasn't the route to the library that Frankie took. It was the route to Mapper's—again at great speed. Once he did slow down a little, as he approached the sweet-shop, but something warned him to take a quick look round and what he saw made him change his mind.

He may have been wrong. The tall figure in the

smart hat, stooping over the newspaper, trying to read in the light of a street-lamp, may have been someone else entirely. But Frankie wasn't taking any chances. They'd got an excellent copy at Mapper's, anyway.

So without even a glance at the litter basket he went on his way, fingers clicking, feet dancing . . .



FRANKIE SAYS:

I suppose he'd got my address from the library assistants.

It mustn't have been long after he'd taken the book back when he remembered he'd left the map inside it. He must have gone tearing back to the library in that big car of his—*va-va-voom*, man! He might even have passed me as I was on my way home.

And when he found that the book had been taken out again I bet he nearly did his nut!

Then he'd ask about who'd got it. And I wonder if he managed to keep his temper with *them*?

"A book. *Fifty Miles Round Nottingham*. I brought it back this morning. Only a couple of hours ago. You *must* have it! Where is it? Eh?"

I can just see him!

And I wonder how he *explained* it to them? I wonder if he gave them the same TV playwright story? Or would he just pretend he'd left a pound note in it, which he'd been using for a bookmark?

It would have sounded a lot more likely. He'd certainly got plenty of pound notes to play around with. Man, that wallet was *full*!

Anyway, they'd check up on the ticket, see whose card it was and give him the address. And we know the rest . . .

Talk about a fibber, though! Wow! . . . What about him saying he was only in Nottingham temporary, when Pop asked him for his address? I mean, *he* must have had a card, too, to have been able to get a book out. And to have a card he must have had a permanent address.

No; the way I look at it is this: the map business was so fishy that he *daren't* give his address to someone who had read that message and who might already have been suspicious. It practically *proved* to me that whatever was buried at X *was* loot! Someone else's loot, not his, of course—but he wasn't getting as upset as all that just because he was keen to take it back to its proper owners. Oh, no!

Well, this was looking serious. And it meant some more detective work with Ordnance Survey maps, because we still didn't know where X was.

Anyway, how about joining us?

- See if you can find it, with the help of the reference number, on any of your maps—at home, at school or in the library, if they have them there. It is a real place, you know.

And to help you—to help you to brush up what you know about scale and references and symbols, why not get a bit of practice in with the problems and games and things I've jotted down underneath?

Some are marked MAPPER'S, some MARION'S and some FRANKIE'S. They're what we thought up ourselves once, to test one another with.

MAPPER'S (on symbols) . . .

- Decide on an area of 6 inches by 6 inches on a One-Inch O.S. map. Any One-Inch O.S. map will do, so long as the area decided on has got a few villages inside it. Now, find out:
 1. how many post offices there are inside that area;
 2. how many churches *with spires*;
 3. how many railway stations;
 4. how many bridges going over water.
- Do this with a pal, or a few pals. See who can find the biggest number of these things in ten minutes. Allow one mark for each. *Knock off* one mark for every wrong answer (say if someone counts a church with a tower instead of a spire, as Marion keeps doing if we don't watch her!). And *knock off* a mark for every item that isn't really there, like when Mapper claimed 7 post offices and could only find 6 when we checked up!
- Apart from the different colouring for roads

and buildings, find out as many other differences as you can between the signs used in the old "New Popular Editions" and the later "Seventh Series" maps. Make a list of them.

MARION'S (on scale) . . .

- How many square miles are there in the 6 inch by 6 inch area suggested by Mapper? (Trust her to begin with a sum!).
- Using a piece of cotton, find out from map (ii) the distance between Nottingham Victoria station and Radcliffe-on-Trent station:
 1. by rail;
 2. by road;taking the shortest route in each case.
- The place on the map where the A52 road crosses the river is Trent Bridge. How far is it, by river, from there to the ferry at Radcliffe-on-Trent;
 1. if you go through Holme Cut?
 2. if you don't go through Holme Cut?

FRANKIE'S (on references) . . .

Think of a really good spot, anywhere within 4 miles of your home:

1. to keep ducks;
2. to go train-spotting;
3. to launch a canoe;
4. to fly a kite;

5. to build a new petrol filling station;
 6. to look for a stolen steam-roller which has been hidden;
 7. to have a picnic;
 8. to see a football match;
 9. to get conkers;
 10. to sunbathe in peace (on a hot day, of course!).
- Give full map references for each of the spots you would choose.
 - Get a pal to check them on the map.

When you're sure you've got them right, have a bit of fun. Write down separately on 10 slips of paper the kinds of places mentioned above. Then write down on another 10 slips of paper the map references of the points you have chosen. Without looking to see what it says, draw one of the slips out of the first pile, then one of the slips out of the second pile. Put them together and see what you've got. See if you've picked a point on the side of a canal as a good place to build a new petrol station!

4 “*This is it!*”

“And he had a big car, this Smarty Pants?”

“Big? Big as a trolley-bus, man!”

As they hurried to the shopping centre, they talked about the stranger, checking and checking again on every detail. Mapper was striding in the lead, with his head deep in the massive sheepskin collar of his windcheater, biting his thumb.

“And—and you say—you say he *looked* like a crook?”

Marion was finding it difficult to keep up with her brother, but for once she didn't protest. She knew there was only just over half an hour left before the shops closed, and—like Mapper and Frankie—she wanted as much time as they could possibly get in front of the bookseller's map shelves.

“Well, I wouldn't say *that* . . .” Frankie wasn't troubled by the pace Mapper was setting. He'd so much speed to spare that he used it up dodging backwards and forwards, first at Mapper's side then, a few paces behind, at Marion's—answering all their

questions, no matter how often they were repeated. "You can't go just by looks . . . But it was the way he spoke . . . and his expression . . . specially when he could see that I didn't believe him . . . He—*sorry!*"

"I should think so!" growled a passer-by, juggling with a parcel that had nearly been knocked out of his hands.

Frankie had been prancing sideways, mid-way between Mapper and Marion, too excited to notice that they had entered the busier shopping streets. Now he quietened down and walked more soberly.

"You sure they don't shut till six?" asked Marion.

"Positive!" grunted Mapper. "Only I wish you wouldn't keep stopping to look in dress-shop windows. We're gonner need every minute!"

"*Stopping?* . . . Well . . . I like that! . . . Just one quick glance . . . and he calls it . . . stopping . . ."

But she was too breathless to argue and she didn't say another word until they had reached the shop and were in the Maps and Guidebooks department.

"Can I help you?" asked one of the assistants, a tall, thin, rather tired-looking young man.

Mapper nudged Marion to remind her that when they were out shopping she was the one who had to do most of the talking.

"We're looking for a map," she said.

"Oh, yes? Whereabouts exactly?"

"Well—we don't really know . . ."

The assistant frowned. Marion had started to blush. Other shoppers were looking at them curiously. A short fat man with beads of rain in his crinkly dark hair seemed particularly curious, pausing in his inspection of a book to stare at them. Frankie tried to explain.

"It's a One-Inch map. An Ordnance Survey map."

"But if you don't know where . . ."

At last Mapper spoke up. Already he was going through the maps, taking them out, glancing at the grid reference numbers across the top and down the sides to see if they contained lines 83 and 36.

"We'll know it if we see it," he said.

"Thank you all the same," added Marion.

The assistant shrugged. They were obviously serious enough. They weren't trying to be funny. They were even polite. Probably—his expression seemed to suggest, as he left them to it—probably they were just dim . . .

There were several shelves of One-Inch Ordnance Survey maps. Quite a number were maps of the Nottingham area, of course. There must have been at least a dozen of Number 112, and there were similar batches of Numbers 121 and 122, covering areas that touched on Nottingham to the south-west and south-east. But there was also a good selection of single maps dealing with all parts of the country.

Taking a shelf each, Mapper, Marion and Frankie worked through them rapidly.

"Here's one!" cried Marion.

Mapper glanced over her shoulder. So did Frankie. Each tried to beat the others to the area where lines 83 and 36 crossed.

"There's a red road across the top!"

"And a yellow road running south-east!"

"And a place called Rat's Castle . . . "

Then their voices dropped.

"But it's only a name—it isn't a castle really."

"And there's no branch line."

"Not even a railway."

"And no canal."

Marion replaced the map of the Hastings district and the others went back to their shelves.* Frankie noticed with uneasiness that it was already nearly a quarter to six. The customers were beginning to thin out. Assistants were chatting in weary groups and they too kept glancing at the clock.

"Here's one!"

This time it was Mapper who raised the cry, but even before they had reached his side he was shaking his head.

"Sorry! It's up a mountain," he grunted.

And, sure enough, they were able to tell at a glance that this wasn't the place. There were no

* Hastings, O.S. Sheet No. 184.

roads of any kind. No railways. No villages. Not even a footpath. Only clustered contour lines.

"Dol— Dol— Somewhere in *Wales!*" grunted Mapper, putting back the map of Dolgellau.*

Marion didn't jeer, to pay him back for his comments earlier, when she'd led them to the spot in the sea on the Torquay map. Nor did Frankie ask him what he meant by talking about Wales—the country his father's mother had come from—in that tone of voice. There wasn't time. It was just leaving ten to.

Back to their shelves they went. Once Frankie began: "Here's—", but broke off, realizing he'd got the numbers mixed up in his haste. He began repeating the correct ones firmly to himself, to make sure.

"Eight - three - nine - three - six - three . . .
Eight - three - "

"Oh, *beck!* Look at the time!"

Interrupted by Marion's cry, Frankie turned to the clock.

Five to, already!

He still had half a shelf to go through, but now he felt too flustered to continue. It was hopeless. There wasn't time. Mapper's face was a blazing red—he was obviously feeling the same way.

Then Marion, who had gone suddenly quiet after her remark about the time, slowly turned from her shelf with an outspread map in her hands and a strange look—half puzzled, half triumphant—on her face.

* Dolgellau, O.S. Sheet No. 116.

“I say . . . look at this . . . I . . . I think . . . I’m sure . . . *This is it!*”

It was.

There was the main road running across the top, as it did on their own two-inches square version. There was the railway line running alongside it, just to the north. There was the branch line, going over a bridge across the main road, a little way past the point where the secondary road turned off. There was this secondary road itself, going through the village and then continuing in roughly the same south-eastern direction as theirs, with the branch line following it part of the way. There was the canal, going under this road and then continuing in a curve, close to the branch line, to the south of it. There was the church, with a spire, and, nearby, the stream going under the road. There was the chapel.

There were a few differences between the Ordnance Survey map and the one they had re-drawn from the sketch-map. The branch line was, after all, marked as a mineral line or siding and not as an ordinary single track, as Mapper had thought. And there was no castle shown in the immediate neighbourhood. However, there was a castle about two miles away, in the right south-south-westerly direction: Belvoir Castle, standing on a hill. And, as Mapper had judged, the land to the north of it—around the road and canal and branch line—was fairly flat, with few contour lines on the map.

Furthermore, although no spinney was marked on the map, the point that came 9 tenths of the way to the east, between lines 83 and 84, and 3 tenths of the way up, between lines 36 and 37—point 839363—fell in the narrow space between the canal and the branch line just before they both went under the road.

It was the map they'd been looking for, all right!

"Number 122, Melton Mowbray," murmured Mapper, ducking below the outspread sheet to see the title on the cover. "Just think! One of those with part of Nottingham on it! And I'd been thinking of getting it when I'd got a bit of cash to spare!"

Frankie was unable to keep still.

"Ouch!" gasped the short fat man, who'd come nearer in the last few moments and on whose toes Frankie had just done a rapid war-dance. "Clumsy young ceejut!"

Frankie apologized hastily and turned to the others, his eyes glowing.

"We might have known it wouldn't be so far away!"

"How d'you mean?"

Mapper had taken the map off Marion and had opened it out more. He was scanning the road that led from Nottingham to the village.

"Well," said Frankie, "the name of the book I found the paper in: *Fifty Miles Round Nottingham*. Smarty Pants must have been trying to find the place in there."

"He can't have managed it, though!" said Marion.

"Not without knowing the name of the village—and that wasn't mentioned on the sketch." He leaned over towards Mapper. "*What's* it called?" he said. "Oh, yes—"

He was about to read the name aloud—Muston—when the assistant interrupted them.

"Closing time now, please!"

Mapper folded up the map quickly, just as the fat man, who had somehow managed to get behind him, was going to peer over his shoulder.

"Some people *are* nosey!" Marion whispered in Frankie's ear.

"We'll take this!" said Mapper.

While the assistant was wrapping it up, they talked excitedly of their find.

"It doesn't look far."

"Soon as we get home I'll run the cotton over it."

"I'd say about fifteen miles."

"We could do it on our bikes easy."

"Let's go tomorrow!"

"The sooner the better."

"I'll make some sandwiches . . ."

The assistant handed Mapper the parcel and some change. He was frowning, looking beyond them.

"Do you want to buy that, sir? It's past closing-time."

It was the fat man. He looked up, startled.

"Eh? . . . Oh! . . . No . . . sorry!"

He closed the book and put it down. As he hustled past them into the street, Marion turned to Frankie.

"*That* wasn't Smarty Pants, was it?"

"Who? Him? *No*, gal! I told you—he was tall, very posh . . . Why?"

Marion pushed back her hair.

"Oh, I don't know . . . I just had a feeling he was trying to spy on us, that's all. Trying to find out where the place was that was interesting us so much."

Mapper pulled up his collar and set off for home at an even faster pace than the one he'd come at.

"It's probably because we were making such a kerfuffle," he said. "Anyone 'ud be curious . . . Come on!"

"So curious that it . . . *wait for me, then!* . . . that it would make him . . . hold his book . . . upside down?" asked Marion.

"Was that how he had it?" asked Frankie.

"Upside down!" repeated Marion, firmly.

"Maybe he came from Australia!" said Mapper.

Frankie laughed. Nevertheless, before they'd gone very far, he was asking Marion if she thought the man had been able to get a good look at the map.

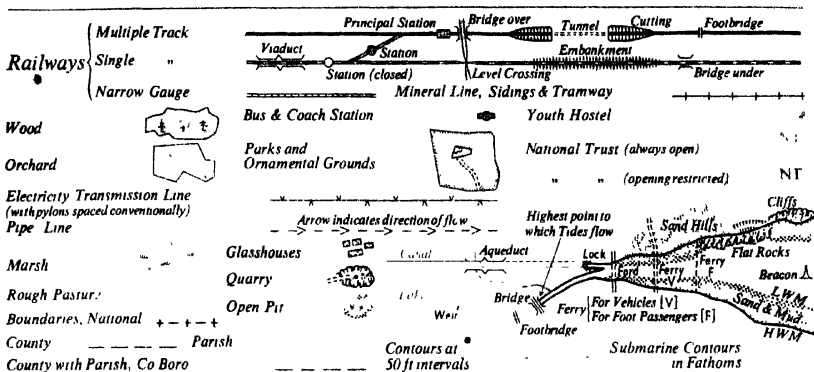
"No . . . When you trod on his toes he was *going* to . . . but it put him off."

Frankie nodded. He felt relieved, but still slightly uneasy.

“And nobody mentioned the name of the place, did they? I mean *aloud*?”

Marion smiled.

“Somebody nearly did! But don’t worry . . . The assistant called time and put you off. And if he hadn’t have interrupted you, I *would*. I was going to tread on *your* toes for a change!”



Church or Chapel with Tower	+
" " " " Spire	+
" " " " without either	+
Wireless or TV Mast	+
Windpump	+
Windmills (in use) (disused)	+
Lighthouse	+
Public House PH	P
Mile Stone MS	T
Mile Post MP	A
Town Hall TH	R
Club House CH	R
Roman Antiquities (AD 43 to AD 420)	VILL A
Other Antiquities	Castle
Site of Antiquity	+
Site of Battle (with date)	1066

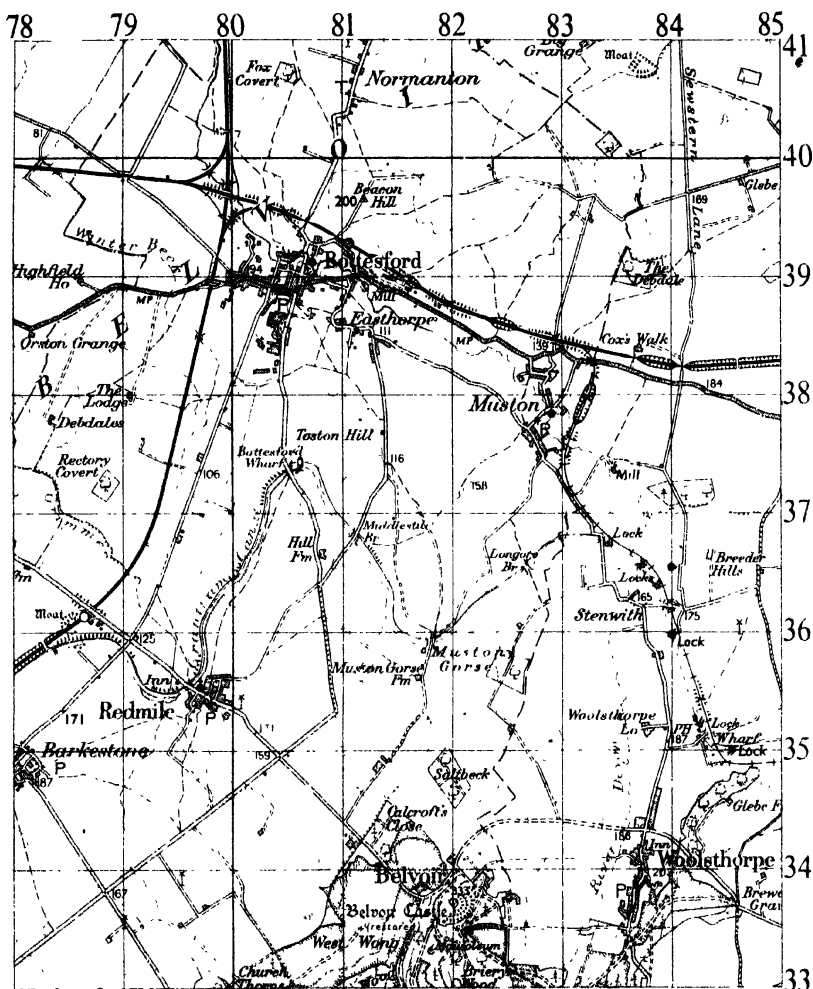
Ministry of Transport, Motorway	or
" " " Trunk	Single & Dual
" " " Class 1	Carriageway
" " " 2	
Roads, 14 ft of Metalling & over (not included above)	
Under 14 ft of Metalling, Tarred	TOLL
" " " " Untarred	Gate
Minor Roads in towns, Drives and Unmetalled Roads (Unfenced Roads are shown by pecked lines)	
Under construction	

Steep Gradient 1 in 5 or steeper	1 in 7 to under 1 in 5
Footpaths and Tracks	
Heights in feet above Mean Sea Level	surveyed by levelling 275
	not surveyed by levelling 1091
Triangulation Pillar	
Intersection, 1 at & Long at 5' intervals (not shown where it confuses important detail)	

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(i)

SYMBOLS USED ON ONE-INCH ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS (SEVENTH SERIES).



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(iv)

MUSTON AND THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT.

From 1" O.S. Sheet No. 122: Melton Mowbray.

This is a continuation of maps (ii) and (iii) and shows the final stage of the journey to "the spot marked X"—otherwise known by its full grid reference: SK 839363. It also shows the various routes taken, first to evade, then to escape from the men in the car.



FRANKIE SAYS:

Fat Pat—that's what we called the man in the shop, the one who'd been snooping. We called him Pat because he sounded like an Irishman—you know, when he called me a "clumsy eejut", and when he spoke to the assistant.

And what a good job it was that he didn't get to know exactly where we were talking about! If he had, they might have gone straight there, that very night, instead of—

But I'm running ahead of the story . . .

First we had to study the map again and make proper plans. We did this as soon as we got back to Mapper's. I think I mentioned before that all this happened during the half-term holiday last autumn, which meant we would be free to go the very next day. Well, that was the first thing we fixed on: at ten o'clock the following morning we'd meet at Mapper's and set out on our bikes.

Then we went over the route on the map and

studied the Muston district more carefully.*

"I still don't get this branch line business," Mapper said. "I mean the way it's marked as a mineral line or siding."

"True enough," I said. "It can't be a siding, it goes on for miles, way out into the country, up into the hills."

"And how can it be a mineral line if there's no colliery? None marked, anyway . . . "

It was their dad who settled that one.

"Mineral line? Just off the Bottesford-Grantham stretch? . . . Yes. ' Course there is! Runs up to the iron workings. It's what they bring the iron ore down on."

We looked at one another, thinking what dopes we were not to have remembered that there were other kinds of mineral besides coal and lemonade!

Next, we ran the cotton over the route—that is, from just behind Nottingham Victoria Station, which is where Mapper lives, to the place marked X on the sketch map—to see exactly how far it was. We did it first by going along an A road all the way as far as the turning just before the railway bridge at Muston, and from there along the yellow road to X (or point SK839363, to give it its full grid reference).

* See map (iv) for this section.

- You do the same and see how far you make it. (If you haven't a copy of O.S. Map No. 122 handy, maps (ii), (iii) and (iv) can be used.)
- Write it down like this:

The distance between SK———— and SK 839363 is — miles.

In the first blank space put the grid reference number for Victoria Station, Nottingham. (And mind you don't put the reference for the nearby *bus* station, by mistake!)

When we'd done that, we looked for short cuts. We didn't find many likely ones, and in the end we decided we'd take only one, between SK586383 and SK656395.

- See where these points are and find out: (a) the distance between them going by the main A52 road; (b) how far it is by the secondary (yellow) road; and (c) how much shorter it is along the secondary road.

There's not as much in it as you'd think, is there? Anyway, we decided to go along the secondary road, seeing that we were going to be on our bikes and it seemed so much quieter.

There was only one other short cut that seemed to be worth thinking about. That's the footpath marked between Cocker Bridge, just before you get to Whatton. It comes out into Whatton village and

starts again just across the main road, leading back to the main road just outside Elton. See it? O.K. . . .

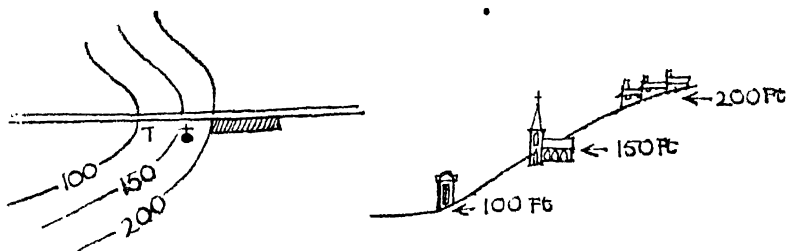
- Write down the full references for Cocker Bridge and the point where the footpath rejoins the main road just outside Elton.
- Write down the distances between these points: (a) by main road; and (b) by taking the footpath.
- Work out how much shorter the second route is.
- Then decide whether it was worth taking, bearing in mind the following facts: that footpaths are often awkward to use with bikes; that there are several streams to cross, with possibly broken bridges or no bridges at all; that we'd got a girl with us; that we might have come across a few harmless cows; that she might have refused to go past them.

Man, you're right! That was a short cut we didn't decide to take, even though Mapper said he'd have liked to see the disused windmill at point SK744393.

One thing we were very glad to note: the route was fairly flat all the way. There weren't many **contour lines**. These brown lines are the way they show hills on the Ordnance Survey maps. Each line is so many feet above sea-level, and if you were to follow one you'd be at the same height all the time. They go up in fifties—fifty feet at a time—and the

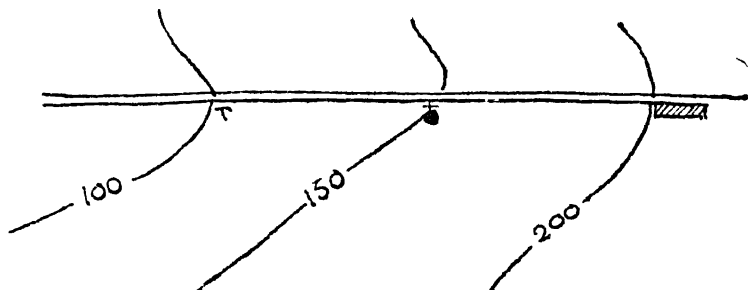
height is marked in small brown figures somewhere along the line.

So if you got line 100 running across your route, and lines 150 and 200 also running across it soon afterwards—the three lines running pretty close together—it would mean that you'd soon be climbing from 100 feet to 200 feet. In other words, a steep hill.



CONTOUR LINES CLOSE TOGETHER INDICATE A STEEP SLOPE

But if, after you crossed the 100 ft line, you didn't cross another for another two miles, and that one was the 150 ft line; and then you didn't cross another, the 200 ft line, for another two miles, the



CONTOUR LINES WIDE APART
INDICATE



A MUCH MORE GRADUAL SLOPE

slope would be much more gradual, wouldn't it?

Well, that's pretty much how they were along the route we were taking.

• Check it for yourself.

There are a lot of things you can tell from contour lines, apart from the steepness of the route you are taking. By studying them on a map, you can tell before you ever reach a place the shapes of the hills and valleys and what sort of views you are likely to get.

One day you may be hearing about a long walk we went, up in some hills—a *really* long one, out in the wilds, lasting days, a *really tricky* one, really nasty at times, man, no kidding!—and then you'll hear a lot more about contour lines.

But just now we're on the track of this loot, making our plans, wondering how much Smarty Pants and Fat Pat know, and hardly able to wait for tomorrow to come.

So let's get on . . .

5 *A Doubtful Start*

“What’s she *doing*? Where *is* she?”

“Mm?”

“Marion! Where’s she got to? It’s nearly half-ten and we’re still here!”

Frankie, in a bright red sweater, was circling round and round in the narrow street outside his friends’ house. He had given his bike a special clean for the occasion and in the brilliant sunshine everything about him sparkled. Spokes, eyes, teeth and hub-caps. Boy and bike sparkled with excitement and impatience.

Mapper, in the green windcheater, remained still, straddling his bike at the kerb, poring over the map already.

Then at last Marion appeared, with a large parcel, and Mapper came to life.

“Hey! You’re not going in *them*, gel, are you?”

She looked down at the new pair of trews she was wearing—a kind of jazzed-up version of the Royal Stuart Tartan, with tight bottoms.

"So *that's* why she's been all this time!" laughed Frankie. "Did you need a shoehorn to get into 'em?"

Marion tossed back her straying lock of hair.

"*This* is why I've been so long, if you'd like to know!" she said, brandishing the parcel before stuffing it into her saddle-bag. "Enough sandwiches for a horse!" she added, staring defiantly at Mapper.

"You're not coming with us in those things!" said her brother.

"All right! No trews---no sandwiches. No cheese sandwiches laced with Branston pickles. No cold sausages. No scooped-out currant buns filled with raspberry jam and best butter . . . "

"All right!" grumbled Mapper. "Come on, then! Only if any village kids start giving you the chie-yike don't expect us to clip 'em for you!"

But he was smiling. Just as eager and excited as Frankie, he couldn't disguise his feelings for long. As they pedalled through the familiar streets of the city—heading for Trent Bridge and what they knew could turn out to be the biggest adventure of their lives—Mapper's voice leapt as high as the voices of Frankie and Marion.

"We couldn't have picked a better day for it!" he called, as they sped past the bright burst of chrysanthemums banked high on their stall at the corner of the covered market.

And the driver of the big American car who pulled up there seconds later and bought a carnation

for his buttonhole—all the time watching to see which way they were going—he seemed to be enjoying the weather, too, judging from the way he grinned and winked at his companions . . .

At first, everything went well for the cyclists. They didn't need a map to find their way to the outskirts of the city, for this was the way to the two football grounds, the river and the great Trent Bridge cricket ground. Only when they came to the point where they had decided to take the short cut to Radcliffe did they experience any difficulty.

True, the railway bridge crossing the road just past the cricket ground was an excellent landmark. So was the canal, a few yards further ahead, at the point where the roads forked. But as they pulled up at the kerb to make sure which way to continue, the actual branching of the roads looked much trickier than it did on the map.*

"Well there's the main road, curving off to the right," said Frankie, looking up. "But it's this lot . . ." He tapped the map, pointing to what looked like a clear-cut fan of three secondary roads to the left. "We're supposed to take the middle one." He waved across at the confusion of buildings—rows of houses, shops, a public lavatory. "But where is it? I'm getting all mixed up."

* See map (ii) for this section. For further sections covering the whole route, see maps (iii) and (iv).

Mapper grinned, fumbling in a pocket of his wind-cheater.

"I always said you were a mixed-up kid!" he murmured. He pulled out what looked like a booklet. "Town plan," he said, opening it. "This is where they come in handy."

He went to the parapet of the canal bridge and spread out the map and plan, side by side.

"Now—here's the same place on the plan . . . A lot bigger—five hundred yards to the inch . . . And here it gives the *names* of the streets and the roads."

He pointed to the road on the plan that corresponded to the middle one of the three on the map.

"'Trent Boulevard'," he said. "That's the one we take. 'Course me, I could have told without the plan, without knowing its name, but it's a good check."

"Big-head!" said Marion.

"That's the word, gal!" agreed Frankie, laughing.

All the same, there was relief in his laughter, for he had to admit to himself that without the plan he might have been tempted to take the branch further to the left, which looked much more rural than the busy street down which they were heading now.

And there was relief, too, in the laughter of the man with the green hat and pink carnation, as he drove slowly over the canal bridge and into Trent Boulevard, after them.

“If they hadn’t stopped there gassing,” he said,
• “they might’ve given us the slip in all these streets.”

For about three quarters of a mile they went along the Boulevard, straight as a ruler, between rows of houses. Then, just as it began to look as if they would never leave this built-up area, the road suddenly turned and became a country lane, narrower, with tall hedges and farm gates and a much wider view of the sky.

Now at last they really seemed to be getting somewhere. The surface of the lane was good and, as they zipped along, Frankie couldn’t stop himself from energetically ringing the bell and shouting wild disconnected things like: “Seats on top!” and “Up the Forest!” and “*Shervamm!*”

Marion joined in, ringing her own bell and laughing at Frankie. She felt so good that she did no more than shake her fist when she picked it out that the bagpipe noises Mapper was making in the rear were really directed at her—a rude comment on her tartan trews.

But their laughter soon ended. They had got little further than half a mile along the lane when Mapper braked and said, in a troubled voice:

“Hey! Wait a minute!”

“What?” Frankie came circling back. “What’s the matter, man? Got a puncture?”

Marion shook her head despairingly.

"No. Worse. He's got a *map*!"

"This is serious!" muttered Mapper. "This is all wrong!"

He had stopped at the end of a lane that went off to the right. A sign pointing down it read: BINGHAMFIELD.

"That'll be the place, there," said Frankie, nodding towards a group of buildings and caravans, a few hundred yards across the fields.

"Yes, I know. But it's not marked *here*, man! No Binghamfield, no village of any kind, no side turning!"

They stared at the map.

"There's a lane turning to the right *here*," said Frankie, pointing to the place on the map.

"That was way down there, just after we'd left the houses. I saw *that*!" muttered Mapper.

"Well it must be this one, then," said Marion, pointing to a lane that went past a house marked *Holme Grange*.

"Too far up. We've not come to that yet. We haven't passed this strip of trees marked on the left yet."

Frankie was looking at the village.

"It's mainly caravans, you know. And the buildings look like Army huts. It's probably not been a village long."

Mapper turned the map over.

"This was revised in 1950. You'd think it would have been there then."

Marion said:

“Well, it still might have been an Army camp at that time, and I don’t think they mark them, do they? Aren’t they supposed to be secret or something?”

“Er—yes . . . ” said Mapper, not very confidently.

He looked relieved to see the grove of trees on the left, when they reached that point shortly afterwards. Mainly ash and oak, they stood in a long narrow strip at the side of the lane, just as the map had promised.

But even here there were doubts.

Half-way along the grove, there was a clearing. At the side of a narrow path going through it, off to the left, was a notice: THE WAY FOR FISHERMEN.

“Not marked!” grunted Mapper.

“It’s a new notice,” said Frankie. “Maybe it’s a new path.”

“This place isn’t marked, either,” said Mapper, staring gloomily at a high wire-mesh fence next to the path, behind which there was a wooden hut and a dozen or so canvas-shrouded boats and a bristle of masts.

A wider path led up to it from the lane. A notice said: *Nottingham Sailing Club. Private Grounds. Members Only.*

“Don’t they look nice?” murmured Marion, look-

ing at the masts, each of which had a tiny blue or red flag at the top.

Mapper scowled.

"It's not marked." He glared at the map. "Not a sign."

"Maybe it's new," said Frankie.

"Don't keep saying, 'Maybe it's new!'" snapped Mapper.

There was a soft chug-chugging of passing boats, invisible but not far away.

Frankie smiled at Marion. He could understand his pal's annoyance.

"It shows the river's neat, anyway," he said.

And now they began to run into other troubles—literally run into them: puddles as big as garden ponds.

"The surface is bad along here," grunted Frankie, threading his way between the holes.

"It's funny how it suddenly gets bad like this," said Marion, glancing back. She noticed a large red car that had stopped just outside the Sailing Club. "I bet *he's* worried about his axles!" she said.

But Mapper and Frankie were pressing on, both of them glad to notice a private lane that turned right, on a bend—the one that *was* marked on the map.

"*That's* the Holme Grange lane!" cried Mapper, suddenly more cheerful.

"We're doing fine!" sang Frankie, ringing his bell.
"Wagons *West*!"

"We're going *east*, you dope!"

Cranes reared up on the left. There was the sound of machinery. Through the hedges, they caught glimpses of big lakes and mounds of earth.

"Looks like a gravel works, said Frankie. "Is *this* marked?"

Mapper nodded.

"A lake is. And some black dots for buildings . . . These, probably," he added, as they approached the main entrance on their left. Then he groaned. "But not *that*!" he said, pointing to the road that went off to the right, over the fields, opposite the main entrance.

He stopped to make sure.

"It's new," said Frankie.

"For Pete's sake, stop saying—"

"It'll be what they've made to take the gravel straight to the main road," Frankie continued, running a finger across the map. "Save 'em going all the way round."

"Yes. I bet that's why the surface of this lane is bad," said Marion. "They'll have let it go since they've had this new road."

That seemed likely enough. And, strengthening Marion's theory, the surface of the lane got worse. Even in the patches where there were no water-logged holes, the tarmac was a dangerous rubble.

"Maps," said Mapper, "ought to show the state of repair."

"If they did," said Frankie, "this would go from *bad* to *horrible*!"

Marion remembered the car and glanced back curiously. She was surprised to see it again. This time it had stopped outside the gravel works.

"That must be where he was going. It's a wonder he didn't use the new road, though. He must—"

"Look out, gel!"

Mapper's warning came too late.

With a splash, Marion ran straight into a puddle—the biggest yet—and for a moment it seemed as if she might lose her balance. She stuck out a leg and managed to keep upright. The water had almost come up to the hub-caps.

Frankie was laughing.

Marion looked up from her inspection of the not too badly splashed treads.

"Well I don't see—"

"Sorry, gal! It's—heh! heh!—it's just that—"

Still cackling, Frankie pointed to a large red and white notice in a gap in the hedge. It said:

GREAT DANGER
15 FT WATER
PLEASE
KEEP OUT

Marion had to smile, too.

“They want to put one of them in front of every rotten puddle!” she said.

Then she continued her journey carefully, much more concerned now about what was in front of her than what was behind.

Through the village of Holme Pierrepont the road improved slightly. It still remained bad, but it was bad in a different way—with fewer puddles and more stretches of mud. It was a bright brick-red mud and it added a few extra splashes of colour to Marion’s trews and had Frankie wishing he’d not spent so much time cleaning his bike. They didn’t mind this so much, however, especially when they saw the spired church on their left, next to the big house, just after a right turn—exactly as marked on the map.

Nevertheless, Frankie couldn’t get rid of a doubt that had begun to nag him, and about a mile further on he voiced it.

They had come to yet another change that wasn’t marked: a railway bridge that crossed the lane, with an embankment on either side in the fields. Admittedly, the bridge was very new, its bricks still clean, its stone facings still bright in the sun. Admittedly the embankment was nowhere near completion—with lorries and dumpers still crawling along it with their loads of earth.

“But supposing the loot had been hidden round

here,” said Frankie. “Supposing the feller who’d sketched the map had made one of this place—as it is now, with all these new roads and paths and this bridge and that whole new village, Binghamfield. And supposing we’d done the same: drawn it out neat and to scale, like on an Ordnance Survey map. Well . . . we’d never have found it on a real Ordnance Survey map, *would* we?”

Marion frowned.

“You mean we might be wrong about this Muston place?”

“Well you can’t exactly rely on these maps being up-to-date in every detail, can you?”

Mapper was shaking his head.

“No. But the main points are still there, The way the road goes. The way the river goes. Groves of trees. Churches . . . And the best way to find out if we’ve been wasting our time is to get there and see . . . ”

Frankie wasn’t the only one to be having serious doubts.

Back in the car—which had stopped once again, near the last bend in the road, too far away to be noticeable—a short man with a double chin and crinkly hair was saying:

“Are you sure they know what they’re doing themselves?”

The man with the green hat fingered his carnation

thoughtfully as he gazed at the three distant figures.
• “Well . . . For a bit they got me thinking it was round here somewhere—the way they kept stoppin’ and lookin’ at the map. But the kiddo with the green jacket thing looks as if he knows what he’s doing.”

The fat man grunted.

“Looks as if he might be a bit of a handful, too. Y’ know—when the time comes to—er—introduce ourselves. Big shoulders, he’s got. Big fists.”

There were two more men in the back. One of them sniggered.

“Now don’t go worrying about a little thing like that, pal! We’ll take care of *that*! ’S what we’re here for, en’t it, Chuck?”

“Sure, Chick!” said his companion, wiping his mouth with the back of a huge hairy hand. “We’ll eat him! We’ll have him for tea! Sheepskin collar an’ all!”

The man with the green hat smiled and switched on the engine . . .



FRANKIE SAYS:

Chuck and Chick . . . We didn't know about *them*. Not at the time. If we had, we wouldn't have done the rest of the journey to Muston quite so cheerfully. We might even have choked over our sandwiches, which we ate at Bingham.

But, as I say, as soon as we left that short cut and got back on the main road we cheered up a bit. For one thing, we could get on faster, on a decent surface. For another, there was too much traffic for Mapper to keep stopping and looking at his map and so we didn't notice any more changes. That short cut road had had so many that it really got me worried.

Of course, Mapper couldn't stop grumbling about it for a while, and when we were having our sandwiches he got busy with a pencil, putting in all the changes we'd discovered.

"There he goes again!" said Marion. "Maps, maps, maps!"

But I notice she soon got very interested herself and started putting *her* fillings in!

- You try it. Trace out the short cut route on map (ii) (or re-draw it on a bigger scale) and, using the proper symbols, put in all the new paths and lanes and things that we noticed. You'll find plenty of details in Chapter 5 to help you to do it fairly accurately. (Except for the railway bridge. I can't say where the embankment went to the *south*, because there wasn't much of it done; but to the *north* it curved round to follow the railway line, just before the river. There it stopped being an embankment and became a bridge, crossing the river side by side with the existing railway line).

Since our journey, the Ordnance Survey has brought out a new issue of Sheet 122. This is the 1962 issue, and that part of the map contains revisions made in 1958. It shows some—not all—of the changes we noted.

- If you can, get hold of a copy and check it against the alterations *you* have made.
- Another interesting thing to do is take a One-Inch Ordnance Survey map on a bike ride or walk in your own area and see if you can spot any changes there. Don't try to cover too much ground. Pick a quiet stretch of 3 or 4 miles and go over it carefully. Make notes of all changes. Then trace or

re-draw a copy of that section of the map and mark the changes as accurately as you can. ,

6

*"That's Smarty
Pants!"*

"There you are!" said Mapper with a flourish, slowing down and drawing into the grass verge at the side of the main road. "The railway bridge up there . . . the turning here."

"And it *is* a pub!" said Marion. "It's a pub on the corner, just as it said on the sketch-map!"

They gazed at the whitewashed building as if it had been a lighthouse on a lonely stretch of coast and they'd been lost mariners.

"'Course it's a pub!" said Mapper, trying to hide his own relief and excitement. "*The Gap* . . . Rhymes with 'map'."

"And it's only two and a half miles to the loot," murmured Frankie, as they turned into the lane. "The last lap!" Suddenly he exploded: "Kie-yie-YIPPEE!"

A dog barked. Cows looked up curiously.

"Take it easy, man!" called Mapper, laughing. "You'll scare these cows. They'll think you're a trail boss or something. They'll think you've come to drive them to New Mexico!"

“HIE-HIE-HER-YIPPEE!”

Frankie's shouts echoed and re-echoed down the narrow lane. Woodpigeons flew up, flapping through the tree-tops.

“HAW! HAW, THERE! HUP!”

Down the lane, ringing his bell, firing imaginary pistols and cracking an imaginary whip, went Frankie.

“Look! Here's the church!” said Marion. “We should have waited to have our sandwiches here, on this bench, nice and peaceful.”

“Not with *him* around!” said Mapper, grinning.

“And here's the stream!” cried Frankie, pulling up at the bridge and leaning over the parapet to spit into the water. “You spit, too! It's lucky!”

“I'll do no such thing!” said Marion, with a toss of her hair. “Childish clots!”

They went on, up the slope, going slower now eager to check every landmark.

“And this red-brick building on the left—this must be the chapel . . . Yes . . .”

They stopped to read the inscription on the notice-board.

Mapper took out the map.

“Just let's get this straight,” he murmured. “At the top we turn—”

“Left!” said Frankie.

“*South-east!*” growled Mapper.

“Hello!” said Marion. “*That's* funny!”

The boys looked up from the map. She was staring back down the lane.

"What?"

"That car. Just pulled up at the bottom. I'm sure it's one that was behind us miles back. When we were on that short cut road."

"Plenty red cars, gel!" said Mapper. "Come on!"

"No—but it's—"

"It's like the one Smarty Pants had!"

Now Frankie was staring.

Mapper and Marion looked at him. He wasn't joking. His eyes were narrowed as he tried to see the occupants.

"Sun's shining on the windscreen . . . but . . . Yes! Heck! That's Smarty Pants all right!"

He had just spotted the green hat.

"They're hoping we'll lead 'em to it!" he whispered, feeling a dryness in his mouth.

"What—what shall we do now?" asked Marion.

Mapper re-opened the map. He was looking grim, but confident.

"Find another way. Shake 'em off," he said.

"But they've got a car! We haven't a chance!"

"That's just where you're wrong, gel! If we can find a route over the fields—a footpath or something, somewhere bikes can go and cars can't—we're laughing . . . Yes, look! Here!"

He began tracing out a route with a big bony finger. Frankie tried to follow it. But the dryness

in his mouth was becoming worse and he had to keep glancing up to look at the car.

"... just round this corner . . . past the houses . . ."

Urgently, Mapper's voice buzzed on, while Frankie thought:

Supposing the men didn't bother to wait to be led to the spot? Supposing they decided to pull up alongside them and grab them and force them to say where the place was?

Then he thought:

But not in the village street, surely . . .

With some relief, Frankie noticed a girl in a light-grey blazer walking towards them down the hill. "Janel!" another girl called, running after her. "Wait for me!" They were only kids, true enough—but they would be witnesses. The men wouldn't dare—

"... then we stick to the canal bank . . . there's bound to be a tow-path . . ."

All the same, as soon as they left the village, when there was no one about, the men might pounce. Even now they might be plotting the move.

"... O.K.? . . . Let's go then!" said Mapper, remounting his bike.

At the top, just before they turned the corner, Frankie glanced back.

The car was on the move again, slowly coming after them. And now its radiator grill no longer seemed to grin. A snarl—a wide wicked snarl—was what it seemed to wear now.



FRANKIE SAYS:

Help!

- Can *you* find a route from the village to the spot marked X? One that would be O.K. for bikes but not—repeat NOT—for cars?

That's all! . . .

7 *The Path³ across the Fields*

"I just hope there haven't been any changes here!" said Mapper, as they cycled round the corner and on through the village.

"Me too!" said Frankie, pedalling faster, still thinking of what might happen once they were beyond the houses: picturing the overtaking car, its slewing across their paths, the swinging open of doors, the grabbing hands, the swift downward curve of a cosh . . . "Where *is* this place we turn off?"

"Side of the last building. To the south."

Sure enough, the turning was there. It began as a narrow lane at the side of a farmyard. It was heavily rutted, muddy and gleaming with puddles. There was really no need for the large sign that read:

UNSUITABLE
FOR
MOTOR
VEHICLES

But these words, echoing so perfectly their hopes, gladdened them as much as if the notice had an-

nounced free seats at a circus for all those whose surnames began with M or W.

Near it was an ordinary signpost indicating that this was an *Unmetalled Road to Redmile*.

"Even so, it's still wide enough if he wants to risk his springs," said Frankie, as they splashed through the puddles.

"Yes, but after this gate it's just a track across the fields, see," said Mapper.

Quickly he dismounted and opened the five-barred gate that ran across the lane, not far from the turning.

"Oh, look!" cried Marion. "I hadn't noticed. That'll be the castle. On the hill."

"Never mind the scenery, gel!" grunted Mapper. "Get through, quick! They're here!"

The car had lurched into the opening of the lane.

Frankie slammed the gate shut and gave it a shake to make sure it was fastened properly. The track across the fields, he had noticed, was still wide enough for a car, but at least the gate would delay the men a few extra seconds if they decided to follow.

"Somewhere along here we turn off to the left," Mapper was saying, now in too much of a hurry to bother about points of the compass. "Through another gate most likely. It looks like a farm track on the map . . . Watch out for it . . . Somewhere along this hedge . . ."

"Well let's hope that *that* one's a bit narrower," said Frankie.

He glanced over his shoulder.

"They've got out of the car!" said Marion, who had just had a look herself.

"Two big blokes I've not seen before!" added Frankie.

"One of 'em's opening the gate! Step on it!"

Anxiously, Mapper scanned the bristling hedge-row on their left, looking for another gate and the side track to the canal. Frankie began to wonder if they'd passed it. Glancing round again, he was glad to see that the car had not yet re-started. Maybe the state of the surface *was* putting them off.

"*Hello!*"

Two black and white collie dogs were coming towards them, tearing across the field to the right—cars back, heads down, barking. They obviously weren't bent on making friends with the cyclists. Nevertheless, they were a welcome sight, for they were farmers' dogs and showed that someone else was around—possible witnesses, maybe rescuers . . . And, yes, two figures—two men in caps and dark blue coats—straightened up from their task in the middle of the field and called to the dogs.

Mapper shouted to them. He had at last noticed a gate.

"*This the way to the canal?*"

"*Eh?*"

Frankie looked round. The car had moved forward as far as the first gate, but had stopped again.

"CANAL?" Mapper repeated.

"*Through . . . gate . . . Then . . .*"

The rest of the man's words were whipped away by the wind.

"What's he say?" asked Marion.

"Don't know, but *through the gate's* good enough for me!" said Mapper. "Come on!"

Frankie was already there, holding it open for them. One of the dogs came up, much slower now, but growling.

"Men in the car!" said Frankie, closing the gate. "They're the ones you want, boy! You see 'em off! Get old Smarty by the pants!"

They were relieved to find that they were now on a mere path at the side of another hedge—simply a strip where the grass was rather thinner than in the rest of the field.

"Wish it *showed* fields!" muttered Mapper, having another look at the map. "It's getting a bit tricky. If this *is* a path, it's supposed to bend right a bit and then go over a stream."

"*Here, then?*" suggested Marion, stopping at a gap in the hedge where there was yet another gate.

They went up to it and looked over. It led into a large field—or, rather, two fields: one of young corn and the other of old stubble, separated by a rutted track overgrown with long coarse grass. This led

to a high hawthorn hedge, through which they could just make out the parapet of a hump-backed bridge.

"That's it!" said Mapper. "The canal. Look . . . " He pointed to the map. "The path *is* supposed to cross the canal by a bridge. Here . . . " He read out the name. "Longore Bridge."

"Don't let's stand talking about it, then!" said Frankie, looking back, glad to see no signs of pursuit yet anxious that they shouldn't push their luck too far.

They went through the gate. Mapper pointed to a ditch that ran under the path at that point.

"The stream," he said, with a satisfied nod. "I said there was one . . . "

"O.K.! The stream! Now come on, man!"

"I said there was one," Mapper repeated, mounting his bike and following them across the stubble at the side of the overgrown track. "Don't know what you'd do without me and my maps!"

For once the others had to agree. They remained silent.



FRANKIE SAYS:

We had other things to bother about just then, when Mapper said:

“I wish it showed fields!”

It was just one of those thoughts that flash through your mind in an emergency.

But later, when it was all over, we thought about it more carefully and had a look at some of the larger scale Ordnance Survey maps: the **2½-inch to the mile** and the **6-inch to the mile**.

They show fields, all right! In fact, on the Big Walk I was telling you about—the one that took days, up in the hills—we used a 2½-inch map some of the way.

These larger scale maps aren't as popular as the One-Inch maps and you don't come across them so often. Being on such a big scale means that each sheet covers a smaller area—a *very* small area in the case of the 6-inch maps. Walkers find the 2½-inch maps useful when they're in an unfamiliar district, but cyclists and motorists usually find them a bit of

a nuisance because they pass so quickly through the area covered by any particular sheet.

As for the 6-inch maps, they cover such a small area that even walkers don't bother with them much, unless they're on a special mission, like ours, when one of the 6-inch quarter-sheets, covering 3 miles by 2 miles, would have been just the hammer!

But see what *you* think.

- Have a look at a 2½-inch and a 6-inch map of your own area, either at school or the public library or the map department of a book-seller.
- Compare them with the local One-Inch map. Then make three lists, one for each map, of all the people who might find each particular sort specially useful. You know: like hikers, motorists, policemen, estate agents, and so on.
- List 5 symbols that are used on a One-Inch map and not on the others.
- List 5 symbols that are used on a 2½-inch map and not on the others.
- List 5 symbols used on a 6-inch map and not on the others.

And don't forget this business of scale. Suppose a lane is 10 miles long.

- How many inches would it measure on a One-Inch map?
- On a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch map?
- On a 6-inch map?

And to get back to our treasure hunt, have a look at map (iv) and work out:

- how far it is along the canal bank from Longore Bridge to the spot marked X;
- how many inches this would measure on a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch map;
- how many inches it would be on a 6-inch map.

Mind you, whatever distance you get it to, it won't be anything like as far as it *seemed* that day! Man, the going was rough! I've said it before and I'll say it again: it's all right for maps to show how long or steep or twisty a path is, but I wish they'd give a few more details about the *state* they're in!

8

*'They're digging at the
bottom of that tree!'*

As soon as they got on to the tow-path—through a small gate at the side of the bridge that lurched on its hinges and was nearly hidden by brambles and thin straggling hawthorn branches—they saw that their progress wasn't going to be easy.

"I bet it's years since any barges have come along *here!*" said Frankie, watching a moorhen as it glided swiftly into a bed of reeds.

"I bet it's years since anyone's ridden a bike along the tow-path, if it comes to that!" said Marion.

She looked at the clumps of coarse grass and the strands of briar and bramble, and then at her already bedraggled and mud-bespattered trews.

"Stop moaning!" said Mapper. "It's not as bad as all that!" He trudged on, pushing his bike in front of him. "Folk have *walked* along it. Fishermen . . . " he added, side-kicking some mussel shells into the water.

But before he had gone very far, even he had to admit that the path was in a terrible state. For it



wasn't only the fact that it was overgrown with weeds that they had to contend with, or that the thick hawthorn hedge had been allowed to bush out too far over it in places. There was also the difficulty caused by its having crumbled away into the water here and there, and the danger of not being able to see at once where this had happened, because of the thickness of the weeds at the water's edge and their merging with those on the remains of the path. More than once, Frankie felt his right foot go skidding towards the water, and he could sympathize with Marion when, screaming, she went half-way up to her knee in it.

"She couldn't help it!" he said, after Mapper had turned and glared and asked if a shark had come out and nipped her, or what.

And sometimes, over the especially bad patches, even *wheeling* the bikes was impossible and they had to carry them.

"*Ay-ee-ob-koh!*" chanted Frankie at one stage, hoisting his up and carrying it above his head like the African bearers he'd once seen in a jungle film. "*Ay-ee-ob-koh!*"

This caused Marion to giggle so violently that she nearly let her own machine drop into the water.

"*Ay-ee-ob-koh! . . .*"

"Belt up, you dopes!" Mapper turned a red sweat-streaked face. He looked as if he could have done without the sheepskin collar now. "There's the next bridge—where the road crosses. We've got to go careful in case they're anywhere around. We might have to flop down in this hedge-bottom any minute!"

Frankie thought of the car-load of men and his earlier fears flocked back. He continued to hum his bearers' chant, but he did so softly and without thinking, merely because the tune had stuck in his head; and he kept glancing up from the treacherous path to see if there was any sign of a car at the bridge.

It had occurred to him that they no longer enjoyed the advantage they'd had earlier—of being able to ride their bikes along paths where the car couldn't

go. On this choked-up tow-path neither bikes nor cars were any good. If the men saw them and decided to come after them, it would be one set of legs against another, and although Smarty Pants would probably be too concerned about tearing his clothes, and the Irishman too short and fat to run far, the other two had looked big enough and fit enough to chase them for miles. And if that happened, one thing was certain: the bikes would have to be abandoned. The hedge was too thick for them to break through and ride off across the fields. Only if the canal had been covered with thick ice would the bikes have been useful just now . . .

As they drew near the bridge they became even warier. About a hundred yards from it, Mapper stopped altogether.

"You two get down!" he whispered. "It looks quiet enough but you never know. I'll just have a scout round."

Crouched in the weeds, they watched as, very slowly, he crept forward, bent low. A few yards from the bridge he stopped again. He seemed to be looking into the hedge on his left.

"What's he seen, I wonder," whispered Marion.

They strained to hear some sound that would give them a clue. Mapper remained frozen—bent forward, his hands nearly touching the ground, like a runner waiting for the signal to go.

Suddenly a blackbird flew from the hedge over

Mapper's head, then dipped low and flew across the canal, clucking and chattering a warning.

Mapper seemed to relax.

"Fine time to be bird-watching!" muttered Frankie. Then: "Hey! Where's he going?" he gasped.

"He's—he's *disappeared!*" said Marion.

It looked as if Mapper had gone through the hedge. Why or where, they couldn't tell at first. There must have been a gap at that point, Frankie decided.

They continued to strain their ears, listening especially for the sounds of a car and men's voices.

Somewhere in the distance there was the faint chugging of a tractor. Then they heard a single hoot of a railway engine, also distant. Then a soft plopping sound from the water, where probably a fish had surfaced. . . .

A short sharp urgent whistle made Marion jump. They looked up and saw Mapper waving to them from the bridge.

"It's O.K.!" he called. "Not a sign. Only look sharp!"

Frankie picked up his own bike and Mapper's and went towards the bridge. At the spot where Mapper had vanished he saw there was a gap in the hedge and a path leading through it to the road, which for a few yards at that point ran parallel with the canal before turning sharp right and going over it.

Mapper had left the bridge. As they went under, he came to meet them from the other side.

“There’s a lock here,” he said. “Or what’s left of it.”

The ground rose at the side of the lock. Standing up there, on the worn weed-bordered flagstones, they were on the same level as the top of the hump-backed bridge and had a good view all round.

They gazed back towards the village, where the long straight line of a nearly trimmed hedges revealed the course of the road. Mapper had been right. There was no sign of a car there. Nor was there any sign of one in the opposite direction.

Frankie looked at the tow-path further along, past the dilapidated lock, the top gates of which were missing completely. He saw that it was even rougher than the stretch they’d already trudged and slipped and stumbled long. In parts it was difficult to pick out where hedge, path and water began and ended, so wild had the bushes and grass and reeds been allowed to grow and spread.

“Tell you what,” he said. “Seeing it’s so quiet on the road and so rough on the path, why don’t we go on the road for the rest of the way?”

“Good idea!” said Marion, inspecting a small triangular tear in the leg of her trows.

Mapper was consulting the map. He shook his head.

“There’s still about a mile to go by road,” he said.

"And look how it twists and turns. That car could be round any of those corners. They could come on to us in a crack, man—just like that. *Then* where would we be?"

With a sigh, Frankie had to admit that it was risky.

But he soon brightened.

"Well what about the railway line, then? Why not go along there? No car's gonner follow us along there, man! And it leads to the same spot."

Frowning, Mapper looked over the bushes towards the track.

"It's an idea . . ." he said. "Only it's trespassing and we don't want *two* lots of folk after us!"

"No—but who's to see us? There's no station or—hm!"

As if in answer, a locomotive came steaming slowly along from the village, pulling a line of empty trucks.

"Don't forget they have linesmen, too," said Mapper.

"And it could be very dangerous," added Marion. "You know what dad's always saying . . ."

Frankie nodded. He sighed again.

"The jungle it is!" he groaned. "Lead me to it!"

Mapper had stiffened.

"Lead you nothing!" he snapped, "Duck, quick, and *dive* into it! There's a car!"

Frankie caught the gliding red glint of its roof

above the hedge just before he ducked. Then, bent double, dragging their bikes with them, they scampered along the exposed ground at the side of the lock and went crashing into the undergrowth at the side of the canal.

Only just in time . . .

No sooner had they got there and dropped flat on their faces behind a wild rose bush than they heard the slam of a car door and men's voices.

"Have they . . . " Marion gulped. "Have they seen us, d'you think?"

"Don't know," whispered Mapper. "But get ready to run, all the same. Just leave the bikes where they are."

"At least they might trip over them," murmured Frankie.

"*Listen!*" hissed Mapper.

The voices were indistinct. The men were talking quietly. Whatever they were saying, there was an urgent excited buzz underlying it. At first Frankie wondered if they were planning a trap, if Smarty Pants was telling the two tall men to run along the railway track and then come up behind them on the tow-path. He glanced round, looking for a stick or a large stone to defend himself with. There was neither. At his side, Marion was clutching a tuft of grass as if she were hoping that that would protect her. Mapper's face was bleeding from a long scratch at the side of his mouth.

But the men came no nearer. And now Frankie could pick out some of the words.

"In the boot . . . " That sounded like Smarty Pants. "Go on! *Move!*"

Again the indistinct excited buzz. Then a creaking of metal.

"Can't you see it?" came the voice of Smarty Pants again, this time raised in an irritable snarl.

"Got it, boss!"

Frankie tried to see what was happening, but Mapper had already decided to do the same and his large bony head was in the way. If Frankie raised his own any higher, it would be clear of the bush.

"Let Chuck have it!" he heard Smarty Pants say.

The voices dropped to a murmur, punctuated by the leader's orders: "No, not there . . . *here* . . . just here . . . "

Then came the sound of a spade slicing into soft earth—the *stab! stab! stab!* of its being driven there in a hurry, by someone with powerful arms and shoulders.

"What are they doing?" asked Frankie.

"Can't quite see!" whispered Mapper. "They're just out of sight, down at the side of the bridge somewhere. Look—you two stay here and I'll get a bit nearer . . . "

Cautiously, keeping close to the hedge, where there were some bramble patches in large round clumps, he moved forward.

"You stay here!" Frankie whispered to Marion, having no intention of lying low himself this time.

Mapper turned and scowled at him, but Frankie ignored him. He knew there was nothing Mapper could do about it.

"Come on, then! Only keep well down!" whispered Mapper.

All the time, the *stab! stab! stab!* of the spade was continuing, with Smarty Pants' commands breaking into the rhythm every so often: "Now try here! . . . No—here! . . . Chick, you take over! . . . "

Slowly raising their heads, the boys peered through a tangle of brambles.

"They're digging at the bottom of that tree!" whispered Mapper.

"Yes! They must—"

As he felt a hand grip his right ankle, Frankie nearly yelled aloud. Only the fact that he could see all four men at the foot of the tall tree prevented him from doing so. Obviously, it couldn't have been one of them.

In fact, it was Marion.

"What are they digging?" she whispered.

"Our graves if you don't keep quiet!" grunted Mapper.

Frankie suddenly frowned.

"Hey! Isn't that an ash tree?"

"Yes . . . it is!" gasped Marion. "I wonder if *this* is the place?"

Mapper was shaking his head, grinning.

"I know what's happened," he said. "Smarty's remembered it said something about the stuff being hidden at the foot of an ash tree near a canal bridge and a railway line. He thinks this must be it!"

"Yes, well — maybe he's right," murmured Frankie. "You sure that's an ash tree, gal?"

"Positive!" .

"There's more than one ash tree in the world," said Mapper. "Besides, the message said it was in a spinney and this is on its own. And we checked, didn't we? Checked it carefully with the map?" He began to slide backwards. "No. While they're digging away, we'll press on . . . "



FRANKIE SAYS:

And while we're "pressing on" as he called it—and, man, *struggling* on or *battling* on would have been nearer the mark, the jungle along there was so dense in places—while we're doing that, you be having a good look at the map around point 839363. See what we'd better do when we get there—where we'd better go from there if there is any loot and we find it.

Why? Don't forget that the men aren't far away. Don't forget that they have a car and that if they decide they're digging at the wrong bridge it won't take them long to get to the next! And don't forget that we'll still be a good long way from the main roads.

- So as I say—if we do find the loot—where shall we go to avoid bumping into them? Or—if they see us—where shall we run to escape from them?

Work out a couple of routes.

9 *The Loot*

The last few yards along the canal bank were probably the worst. Nettles, thistles, briars, brambles and the tall tough withered strands of grass combined to slow them down even further, by getting entangled with the spokes and hubs and chains of their bikes, by pricking their legs, by stinging their hands, by tearing their clothes.

But they were sustained by the sight of the bridge they were approaching and the knowledge that they would soon be able to see just what was buried at the spot marked X. On their left, beyond a tall dense ragged hedge was the spinney. Mapper had already taken from his saddle-bag a garden trowel—a brand-new one he had bought specially that morning.

“I hope *we* don’t need a spade!” he said now. “I thought this would be enough . . .”

“How do we get into there?” asked Frankie, glancing up at the hedge.

“We’ll soon see,” grunted Mapper.

He was dragging his bike along, too impatient to

stop now and tear the tangled grass from its wheels.

At the bridge there was a narrow path leading up to the road. It too was overgrown and slippery, but compared with the tow-path itself it was like the M1. As they went up it, they looked about them eagerly. Over an old wooden fence on their left, at the bottom of a slope, there was the spinney—wedged between the canal and the railway track. Ahead of them was the road, continuing its curve over the canal bridge to cross the railway by a second bridge.

“Just like on the map!” murmured Mapper, with a deep sigh.

They stopped and surveyed the spinney.

“I bet *that’s* the tree!” said Marion.

The boys nodded. There was no mistaking it. Rising up from the hawthorn bushes and ash saplings was an ash tree, not yet fully grown but easily the tallest there, still with its leaves unshed. A sudden gust of wind made its branches stir and seem to whisper.

Mapper propped his bike against the fence.

“Come on! Through this gap. We’ll leave the bikes here.”

They scrambled down to the spinney. Around the edges the undergrowth was tall, but the weeds thinned out amongst the saplings. There were only a few bare-looking nettles rearing and drooping here, and they were able to approach the tree easily enough.

"Yes, look—it does fork!"

Marion whispered the words. Maybe it was because down there, in the half-light, everything seemed so still. Maybe it was because only a few inches of earth and Mapper's trowel now lay between them and anything that was buried there.

They stared at it. The fork started almost at ground level. The leaf-mould round the base covered most of the joint, making it look like two trunks growing close together. But it was—Mapper's foot kicked some of the leaf-mould away—a fork.

"Looks easy to dig into, anyway," he murmured.

"That's probably why they picked it," said Frankie. "Whoever hid it. Whatever it is."

Mapper seemed reluctant to start.

"'Where it forks . . .'" he said, thoughtfully. "I suppose we'd better start just in *front* of the fork . . ."

Frankie felt like snatching the trowel out of his pal's hand, walking up the trunk, doing cartwheels all round the tree . . . anything . . .

"Come *on*, man!" he pleaded. "Get digging!"

Mapper stooped and began to jab steadily with the trowel, throwing up a ginger-brown heap of earth and leaf-mould. The others bent over him, urging him on.

"Try here . . ."

"A bit more this way . . ."

"Maybe the other side of the trunk . . ."

"Sure you're going deep enough, man?"



They began to understand how Smarty Pants must have been feeling back at the other tree.

"Ah!"

"What?"

"What is it, man?"

"Something . . ." Mapper's jabbing became faster, less forceful, more exploratory, "Something soft . . . cloth . . . just—" He put down the trowel and began to tug. "Just a minute . . ." He heaved. The object resisted, then came up, sending a spray of leaf-mould into their faces. "A gas-mask container!"

"Like dad's!"

"I hope *this* hasn't got someone's sandwiches in it!" grunted Mapper.

It was damp and slimy. He unfastened the studs. Marion shuddered as a large beetle dropped out and went scurrying away.

"Looks like a game of Magic Parcels!" said Mapper, taking out a bulky plastic bag fastened with string—the sort of bag sometimes provided with plastic macs.

He plucked the string off, unwound the flap, then gasped.

"Wow!"

"*Rings!*"

"Diamond rings!"

"A ruby one!"

"Is that emerald?"

"What's this funny pinky greeny stone?"

"Let me try one on, Joe, *please!*"

There must have been dozens. Two of them were still in their small square boxes. There was a row of four on a ripped-off chunk of velvet-covered cardboard. Stuck to the velvet were some price tags: £105 . . . £120. 15s. . . .

Mapper folded them up in the bag and readjusted the string. His face was very pale as he stowed the bag away in the gas-mask container.

"We've got to get to the police as soon as we can! This lot must be worth—" He broke off. Then: "*Down!*" he gasped. "*Down! Get down!*"

They crouched low, listening. They had all heard the car. Now it had stopped and there was the sound of slow footsteps up on the road.

"This looks a likely spot!"

"Fat Pat!" whispered Marion.

"Sh! Be quiet!"

"Hey!"

Something in the tone of that last exclamation made them clench their fists.

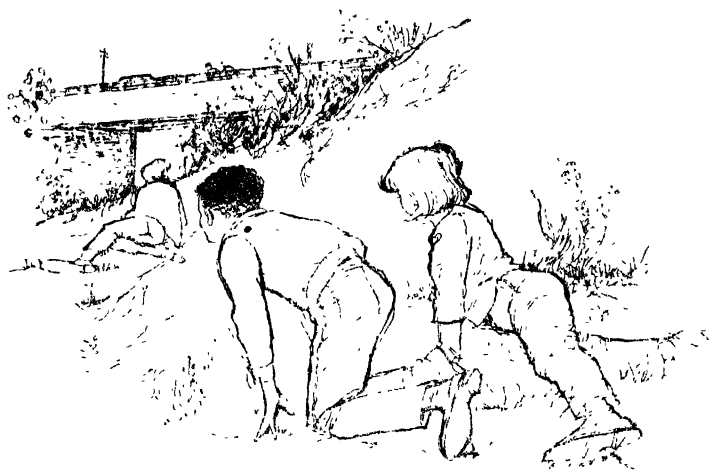
"Hey!" The man's voice rose sharply. *"I can see some bikes—down that path!"*

Mapper had been hurriedly scanning the map. Later he told the others that he just didn't know which way they should run, that he was beginning to feel like a rabbit in front of a stoat—paralysed. Along the railway line seemed too exposed. Back along the canal bank seemed no good either: on their way between the last two bridges they *had* passed a house—an old lock-keeper's cottage, it looked—and he wondered for a second whether to make for that. But it had been on the opposite bank, and anyway, to get back to the tow-path they would have had to go round the way they'd come—straight into the arms of the men, who were already inspecting the bikes.

"It looks like them kids!"

"Yer . . ."

Mapper slung the gas-mask container over his shoulder. It seemed to him that there was only one



thing for it—to dash straight across the line and into another spinney opposite. Actually, as far as he'd been able to make out from a glance at the map, it was part of an old lane—perhaps the original lane, before the canal and the railway had been made—but now it did look like a spinney. The mountain ash and hawthorns that grew wild there would give them plenty of cover from the road.

If only they could get across the line without being seen!

There came the slam of a car door and more footsteps. Frankie was wondering if it wouldn't be as well to creep further into the spinney they were already in and hide. But Mapper was pointing

across the line, warning them to get ready.

"We've got to make a dash for it!" he whispered.
"Before they come down . . . Now!"

As they burst out of the undergrowth and scampered across the rails, bent double, they heard a cry.

"Hey! The kids! . . . COME BACK!"

"Let 'em go!"

"But they might . . . "

Into the second spinney they crashed, without even glancing round. In there too the light was dim and the undergrowth sparse. Mapper beckoned them on.

"We've got to keep over to the left . . . It's not very big and the road's only just up there, on the right . . . " He glanced at the map, which he was still clutching at the ready, almost as if it were a weapon. "There should be another lane, a side lane, just ahead . . . yes . . . "

He stopped for a few seconds. Frankie was listening for sounds of pursuit. Marion was clutching his sweater at the back. But they heard no footsteps. Only a hubbub of voices. Then Frankie realized that the men were probably busy investigating the tree, much more bothered about the loot than about them. Seeing such a small hole, they'd most likely think that they had disturbed the kids before anything had been found.

"If we cut across this field on the left we should

get into the lane," Mapper was saying. "There's a black dot, half-way along it on the map. That means a building. Let's hope it's a farm-house!"

"Yes—and let's hope *this* lane's not fit for cars!" murmured Frankie, noticing that the dot was the best part of an inch from where they were.

"It's not coloured . . . means it must be pretty rough . . . Anyway, we'll soon see . . ."

With one hand firmly over the gas-mask container and the other still clutching the map, Mapper was already squeezing through a gap in the hedge. The others were glad to follow.

It was exposed in the field—far too exposed for Frankie's liking—but hoping that the men were still pre-occupied with the tree, they ran over the grass, making for a line of close-packed hawthorns that indicated the course of the lane.

"Looks pretty thick . . . this hedge!" gasped Marion.

"Thinner up here!" said Mapper, swerving.

He was right. But it was a struggle to get through, nevertheless; and when they looked at one another—at the tears and scratches and smears of dirt—they forgot the loot for a moment.

"Look at my trews! Ruined!"

"What about my pullover?" grunted Frankie, pulling at a dangling piece of red wool, then stopping when he saw that he was unravelling one of the sleeves.

"And my cheater!" grunted Mapper. "I left half my collar on a bit of barbed wire back there!"

He lifted an arm to explore the back of his neck. The gas-mask container swung with the motion and clumped against his side, reminding them of more important things.

"You think they've seen where we've come?" asked Frankie, peering through the hedge.

"Nargh!" said Mapper.

"I *hope* not!" said Marion.

They saw what she meant. The lane was all grass—a green lane—like an endless strip of field between hedgerows. But it had been recently mowed. The ground was well drained and felt firm. It looked perfectly possible for a car to use it.

"Let's not stop for a picnic, anyway!" said Mapper. "The sooner we get to a house with this lot the better!"

"A house with a phone, too!" added Frankie, as they trudged on.

He had had a sudden vision of a lonely cottage with only a frail old widow-woman in it besides themselves—and the gang of men besieging it.

It was not even that.

It wasn't a house at all—simply a deserted barn. But by the time they had reached it they were convinced that they had thrown off the gang. None of the men had come running after them, bellowing

for them to stop. They had neither seen nor heard anything of the car. So they were not particularly worried.

"There's a farm over *there*," said Marion. "Across the fields."

Mapper shrugged as they gazed at the group of buildings about a quarter of a mile away.

"We might as well go on to the main road and stop a car or something and take these straight to the nearest police station ourselves," he said.

The idea was a tempting one. It sounded so much better than sharing the glory with some farmer.

"Yes!" said Frankie. "Let's do that!"

They went on down the green lane, chatting about the rings, stopping to peep at them occasionally, and wondering what the reward would be and where the men had got to.

"Perhaps they've taken our bikes out of spite," said Marion as they approached the woods through which, according to the map, the lane ran.

"Let 'em!" said Mapper. "I've got the number of the car—"

"You *have*, man?"

"'Course! Back in the village. Besides—whichever this stuff belongs to will make it right, don't you worry!"

"I bet they're—"

Frankie was going to say that he betted the men were still digging, when the sound of a car engine

made him turn. Waves of electricity seemed to run up and down the backs of his legs.

“*It’s them!*” he cried.

“Oh! What—?”

“Run for it!” shouted Mapper. “Straight ahead! Into the woods! They’ll never get that thing through here!”

His words seemed true enough. They had just reached an old bleached farm wagon, abandoned a few yards from the entrance to the woods, standing there like a sentry. And even if this hadn’t been there, partly blocking the way, the sudden narrowing of the lane at the woods themselves would have been enough to baulk the red car. For here it became a mere path, hardly wide enough for a Mini-Minor to get through, and, in the middle, between ruts that could only have been made by a tractor, the grass grew tall and thick and looked tough enough to foul the low-slung axles of any ordinary car.

Along these ruts, Mapper, Frankie and Marion dashed—slipping and slithering. Shouts behind them told them that the gang had indeed got out of the car and were continuing the chase on foot. But they daren’t look back to make sure. All their senses were concentrated on getting through the woods as quickly as possible, without tripping over a root or dislocating an ankle. Once through there they would be safe, they hoped . . . Once through there . . .

“There’s—some houses—some houses marked—” Mapper gasped out the words as he raced along, clutching the gas-mask container like a Rugby three-quarter. “They’re just—out—the other side—of the woods . . . In a lane—at the corner . . .”

His words encouraged them. Frankie had been feeling too winded to go much further. Marion, just in front of him, had also looked to be getting into difficulties: slowing a little, throwing her arms and legs about more wildly. But Mapper’s information gave them hope. So did the fact that their pursuers were also finding the going hard—judging from the grunts they kept hearing and the crashing and the way the men had stopped shouting, obviously short of breath.

A yelp and a rattle of curses made Frankie look round for the first time. What he saw cheered him even further. One of the men had fallen and another had come crashing down on top of him. The big men. Smarty Pants was just coming up behind them, stooping to help one of them up, snarling at them, purple-faced. Fat Pat was nowhere to be seen.

Frankie turned and ran on. They couldn’t have been far from the end of the woods. He hoped the buildings Mapper had mentioned wouldn’t prove to be a group of deserted sheds, more barns, places like that. Well . . . they’d soon see . . .

When they emerged, they found the lane was still

as narrow as it had been in the woods, and still as treacherous.

“Where’s—these—houses?” gasped Frankie. “I thought—pooh!”

The stink made him close his mouth. They were passing a pile of refuse in the hedge bottom. But it was *kitchen* refuse, and whatever he thought of the smell, the sight was certainly welcome.

“Look—chimneys!” cried Marion.

And sure enough, there stood a row of cottages, at the side of another track that went off to the left. There were curtains in the windows. The lane had a better surface.

“Civilization!” shouted Frankie, laughing with relief.

But Mapper was frowning.

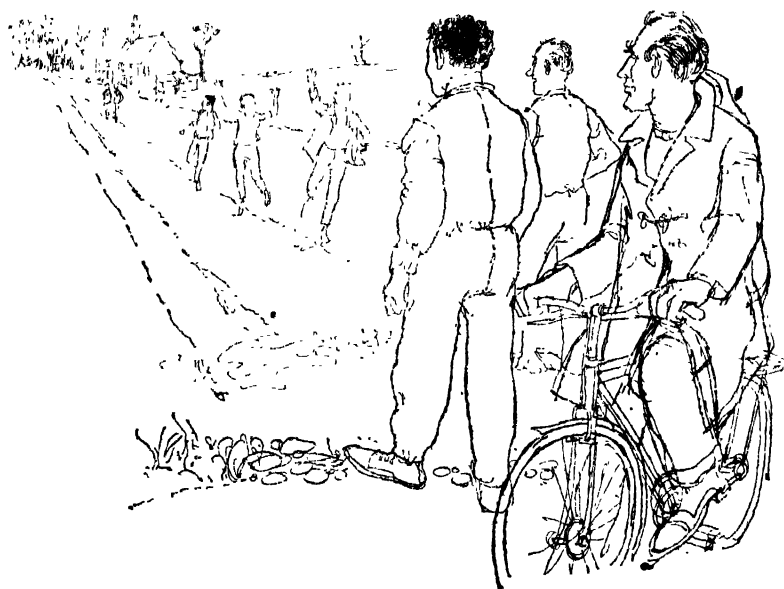
“They look shut up!” he grunted. “Maybe the folk are all out! . . . Women shopping . . . husbands working . . . ”

He looked back down the lane. One of the men had just come lumbering out of the woods, limping a little.

“If nobody *is* in . . . ”

He glanced up the lane, trying to pick out the main road. Then the progress of a distant furniture van told him that they had still a long lonely stretch to go.

“Come on!” he said, doubtfully, making for the silent cottages. “We’d better risk it. Knock at one



door each. And if nobody answers . . . Hel/lo!"

His voice rose with gladness at the sight of a little group of men coming towards them along the side lane: two of them in white track-suits, jog-trotting, and one in a purple duffel-coat on a bicycle at their side. Now it didn't seem to matter if the cottages *were* deserted.

"Thank heavens!" sighed Marion.

"Hey!" Frankie was staring at one of the men in track-suits—at the short compact figure with the abnormally wide shoulders and the face that was even darker than his own. "It's Samuel J. Samuels!"

There was no mistaking the features of the Number Three contender to the welterweight boxing

championship of half the world. Ever since he had arrived in England for a fight at the Nottingham Ice Rink, his photographs had been in all the papers—*"Sammy J. Gets Busy in the Gym"*—*"Sammy J. Wraps Himself Round a Steak"*—*"Sammy J. Sees the Sights"* . . .

"So it is!" said Mapper.

The cyclist rang the bell.

"Come on, kids! Outa the way!" he said, in a thin piping voice.

But they must have looked an odd spectacle, dishevelled and mud-stained as they were, for the runners had stopped even before Marion had gasped, "Help us—pleasc!"

"Whatsamatter?" drawled Sammy J., without a trace of breathlessness, his large brown eyes glowing with curiosity.

"These men—" Mapper pointed down the lane along which Chick and Chuck were coming, no longer running, but walking slowly, hesitantly, waiting for Smarty Pants and Fat Pat. "They're chasing us. They . . . " Mapper tore open the gas-mask container and fumbled with the plastic bag. "Look . . . these rings . . . we found them. We think they've been stolen. We want to take them to the police. But these men are trying to stop us . . . "

"Wow!"

Sammy J. and the others were staring at the rings.

"Them ain't glass!" piped the cyclist, bending his bald freckled head to get a closer look.

"They *ain't*, guv!" growled Sammy's partner, a large broken-nosed man, an Englishman by the sound of him.

"*Just a minute, there!*"

Smarty Pants was striding up. He too had got somewhat dishevelled during the chase. There was a patch of mud on one lavender-grey knee, and his green suede shoes had got so wet that they looked black in the places where the mud wasn't caking them. But he wore his curly-brimmed green hat at a jaunty angle and there was a hard confident look in his sloping eyes.

"Nahw then, you young thieves!" he continued, in what he obviously hoped was a cultured accent. "Hend thet beg over, quick!"

"Thieves?" cried Mapper, clutching the bag all the tighter and stepping behind Sammy J. "*You're* the thieves, if anybody is!"

"They've stolen that—ah—those articles!" Smarty Pants was saying to the men. "Now we've caught them they're trying to lie their way out."

The man on the cycle sighed.

"These delinquents!" he said. "We got 'em in the States, too. They're *everywhere! Everywhere!*"

Mapper had gone red.

"What articles?" he said. "What's *in* this bag then, if it's yours?"

The sneer left Smarty's face. He began to go redder himself.

“Er—sparklers—*jewels*—er—”

“What sort?”

“Er—necklaces—bracelets—er—rings . . . But I’m not arguing with *you*, you—”

“You don’t seem so sure!” said Mapper.

“No, you don’t, mister!” Sammy J. was nodding thoughtfully. “Maybe we’d *all* better go along to the cops. Sort it out there.”

Smarty glared at him. Then he snarled:

“We’re not going to argue with you, either, you wog! Chuck—get that bag off the kid!”

Chuck moved forward. Sammy J., whose eyes had suddenly narrowed, also moved forward, blocking Chuck’s path.

“Move over, matey!” grunted Chuck.

He towered over the boxer. Sammy J. didn’t budge. Chuck clamped a big hand on his shoulder.

The cyclist howled.

“Sammy J.! Don’t do it! Don’t you go bustin’ yah hands or so help me you’ll be looking for a new manager! I’ll sue yah for breach of contract! Sammy J.—*please!* . . . Argh! Leave the bum to me!”

So saying, he rode his bike full tilt at Chuck, his polished bald brown head thrust forward, directed straight at Chuck’s chin.

Sammy stepped nimbly aside. The head made contact with the chin, There was a loud crack. Then down went the thug like a log.

“*Chick!*” yelped Smarty Pants.

But Chick, who had already moved towards Mapper, was finding his way blocked by the other man. As Frankie and his pals found out later, this was Sammy's chief sparring partner, a former middle-weight boxer known throughout the country's halls and booths as Vernie the Vice, because of his habit of holding. Now, without a referee to check him or a crowd to barrack him, he must have been thoroughly enjoying himself, for he had somehow managed to get Chick's left hand securely tucked under his own right armpit, while his right hand had fastened on Chick's right wrist. Chick, who also knew a trick or two, started to bring his knee up, but he wasn't quick enough. Into his middle went a fist the size of a prime York ham and down *he* went, doubled up and gasping.

Smarty Pants and Fat Pat didn't wait to argue any further. With Pat twinkling and puffing in the lead, they fled down the lane.

"Let 'em go!" laughed Mapper. "We've got the number of his car!"



FRANKIE SAYS:

And that was that—as far as the actual adventure was concerned.

Sammy J.'s manager went and phoned the police while the rest of us kept watch on Chuck and Chick. He also phoned the newspapers! Maybe you'll remember reading about it at the time. You know—SAMMY J. HELPS RECOVER GEMS—headlines like that, with lots of cracks about diamond rings and boxing rings.

As Mapper said: "Anyone 'ud think *he'd* done all the graft!"

In fact, there were times when we wished we'd gone straight to that farm back up the green lane. No farmer would have been given a bigger share of publicity than the chunk that Sammy got!

Still, we couldn't grumble . . .

As for the loot, not many of the papers managed to get the value right. Most of them said that the rings—which had been stolen from a London shop—were worth £5,000, but that's a load of old baloney.

Actually they were valued at just over £2,000. I *know*, man, because the insurance company's reward was ten per cent of the value, and the three of us were given £200 to share!

What about the sketch-map? Who'd drawn it and what had Smarty Pants to do with it?

Well, it all came out in court. The man who'd drawn it was the one who'd carried out the original robbery. He'd been caught and given eighteen months for it. They found part of the loot on him, but before he'd been tracked down he'd managed to hide the rings. He swore he'd lost them while making his getaway. In jail, he began to get worried about whether anyone would find them. He knew he'd been in too much of a hurry to bury them deep and he was afraid the leaf-mould might get washed away in heavy rain and leave the bag uncovered.

"Every time it rained I went through purgatory!" he said in court.

So he decided to smuggle out to his wife instructions about where they'd been hidden, hoping she'd go and put them somewhere safer. He'd already told her which village it was near, so he left its name out of the map he drew. That was a good job, of course, because the man he asked to smuggle out the message double-crossed him.

"I thought he couldn't read!" he moaned, pointing to Chuck. "I thought he was dim! I thought he was honest!"

We had to smile at that last bit, seeing that it had just come out that Chuck was being released after doing twelve months for robbery with violence!

Anyway, Chuck took the note to Smarty Pants, who left it in the library book after he'd been trying to find where the place was.

"If only I hadn't put the reference number," the prisoner said. "Nobody would have found it! Not even the kids. But I wanted to make sure the wife went to the *exact* spot. You know what women are like . . . "

Mapper felt a bit sorry for him, especially when he said that he'd been interested in maps all his life and had used them many a time on his jobs. Marion told him not to talk daft.

"Crooks are crooks," she said. "A mobile policeman doesn't feel sorry for car thieves just because they've always been crazy about cars, too!"

Sensible girl, Marion—but I think she was also just a bit needled over what the prisoner had said about women!

Smarty Pants swore blind that they had meant all along to turn the stuff over to the police, and although the magistrate gave him a very old-fashioned look and said a few sarcastic things, it couldn't be *proved* that Smarty was lying. So he got off. So did Fat Pat.

Chuck and Chick weren't so lucky. Chuck got six months for assault (even though he'd suffered

most from Sammy J.'s manager's head!) and Chick turned out to be a deserter from the Army and was sent back for a court-martial.

Mind you, as far as Smarty Pants was concerned, the big punishment was not getting his hands on those rings. You should have seen the dirty look he gave us on his way out of court. He didn't say anything, but it was written all over his face: "You wait!"

Well, we didn't have very long to wait as it happened—but that's another story.

The bikes?

They were all right, just where we'd left them. The police brought them back in a patrol car. Oh, and by the way—if you didn't read about it in any of the papers, I bet you can't guess the name of that green lane we went along after we'd dug up the loot! The map says *Sewstern Lane*, but I mean the name the people round about call it.

I'll tell you. *Dick Turpin's Lane*. It's supposed to be part of one of the short cuts he used to take to get from one section of the Great North Road to another.

What about Sammy J.?

Well, he won on points. We got quite pally with him because of this loot business and his manager gave us free ring-side seats for the fight. Marion covered her eyes most of the time, but Mapper enjoyed it and so did I. Usually we'd have shouted

for the English boxer but—well, as I say, Sammy was a pal of ours.

• So there it is. The full story of Mapper Mundy's Treasure Hunt. 'Course, it's easy to see now the mistakes we made—where we went wrong, where we could have saved time—but we had a lot to learn about maps at that time. I mean, how do you think *you'd* have gone on? Could you have done any better? Why not test yourself and see?

Like this, for instance:

- Working in pairs, one of you think of a likely spot to hide a similar bag of loot, somewhere about 15 miles from home, out in the country. Give its reference number and see if your pal can find it on the One-Inch Ordnance Survey map.
- Now work out a suitable route for getting there on bikes, taking any short cuts (also suitable for bikes) that will *each* cut half a mile or more off your journey.
- Give the reference number of the point where each short cut leaves the main route, and the number of the point where it rejoins it.
- We first noticed that Smarty Pants was following us at a point just over two miles from our destination. Using a piece of cotton, see where you would be on your chosen route

- at a point $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from your destination. Imagine that you find out just there that you are being followed by some men in a car. Do what we did and work out an alternative route from that point—a route along which you could go but cars couldn't. Don't worry if it wanders about a bit—you're not taking a short cut this time. And don't worry if it doesn't lead right up to the spot. So long as it takes you part of the way there, or helps to throw the car off your track, it will do fine.
- Imagine that when you reach the spot and find the loot the men in the car arrive, just as they did with us. Work out your escape route *on foot* to a place where you would be most likely to get help.

P.S. I nearly forgot!

The insurance company who gave us our rewards did it this way: £50 each to be put in the bank and about £20 each to be given to us in the form of something we could enjoy at once.

Marion chose a complete new outfit of clothes.

I got a record player.

And Mapper — well, you might *guess* — about seventy of the One-Inch Ordnance Survey maps that he didn't already have, so that he'd got practically the whole of England covered!